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THE

WORKS

OF THE

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An Extract from Mr. LAW's

SERIOUS CALL

TO A HOLY LIFE.

CHAP. XVIII.

Recommending devotion at three o'clock, called in scripture the ninth hour *of the day. The subject of prayer at this hour may be* resignation *to the divine pleasure. The nature and duty of conformity to the will of God in all our actions and designs.*

1. *THERE is nothing *wise*, or *holy*, or *just*, but the *great will* of God. This is as strictly true as that nothing is infinite and eternal but God.

* No beings therefore, whether in heaven or on earth, can be wise, or holy, or just, but so far as they conform to *this will* of God. It is conformity to this will, that gives virtue and perfection to the highest services of angels in heaven; and it is conformity to the same will, that makes the

ordinary actions of men on earth become an acceptable service to God.

* The whole nature of virtue consists in conforming, and the whole nature of vice in declining from the will of God. All God's creatures are created to fulfil his will; the *sun* and *moon* obey his will, by the necessity of their nature; *angels* conform to his will, by the perfection of their nature: if therefore you would shew yourself not to be a *rebel* and *apostate* from the order of the creation, you must act like beings both above and below you; it must be the great desire of your soul, that God's will may be done by you on earth, as it is done in heaven. It must be the settled purpose of your heart, to *will* nothing, *design* nothing, *do* nothing, but so far as you have reason to believe, it is the will of God.

2. 'Tis as necessary to think thus of God and yourself, as to think that you have any dependance upon him. And it is as great a rebellion against God, to think that your will may ever differ from his, as to think that you have not received the power of *willing* from him.

You are therefore to consider yourself as a being, that has no other business in the world, but to be that which God requires you to be; to have no tempers, no rules, no designs of your own, but to fill some *place*, and act some *part* in strict conformity, and thankful resignation to the divine pleasure.

To

To think that you are your own, or at your own diſpoſal, is as abſurd as to think that you created yourſelf. It is as plain that you are thus God's, that you thus belong to him, and are to act and ſuffer all in thankful reſignation to his pleaſure, as that in him you *live, and move, and have your being.*

3. * *Reſignation* to the divine will, ſignifies a chearful approbation, and thankful acceptance of every thing that comes from God. It is not enough patiently to ſubmit, but we muſt thankfully receive, and fully approve of every thing, that by the order of God's providence, happens to us.

* For there is no reaſon why we ſhould be patient, but what is as ſtrong a reaſon why we ſhould be thankful. If we were under the hands of a wiſe and good *phyſician* that could not miſtake, or do any thing to us, but what tended to our benefit; it would not be enough to be patient, and abſtain from murmuring againſt ſuch a phyſician; it would be as much a breach of gratitude, not to be thankful for what he did, as it would be to murmur at him.

* Now this is our true ſtate with relation to God; we cannot be ſaid ſo much as to *believe* in him, unleſs we believe him to be of *infinite wiſdom.* Every argument therefore for patience under his diſpoſal of us, is as ſtrong an argument for thankfulneſs. And there needs no more to diſpoſe us to this gratitude towards God, than a

full belief in him, that he is this being of infinite wisdom, love and goodness.

Do but fully assent to this truth, and then you will chearfully approve of every thing that God has already approved for you.

When you are satisfied that God does not only do that which is wise, and good, but which is the effect of infinite wisdom, and love in the care of you; it will be as necessary to be pleased with every thing which God chuses for you, as to wish your own happiness.

4. Whenever therefore you find yourself disposed to *murmuring*, at any thing that is the effect of God's providence over you, you must look upon yourself as *denying* either the wisdom or goodness of God. For every complaint supposes this. You would never complain of your *neighbour*, but that you suppose you can shew either his *unwise*, *unjust*, or *unkind* behaviour towards you.

Now every impatient reflection under the providence of God, is the same accusation of God. A complaint always supposes *ill usage*.

Hence you may see the great necessity of this thankful state of heart, because the want of it implies an accusation of God's want either of wisdom, or goodness in his disposal of us. It is not therefore any high degree of perfection, founded in any uncommon *nicety* of thinking, but a plain principle, founded in this plain belief,

lief, that God is a being of infinite wiſdom and goodneſs.

5. This reſignation to the divine will, may be conſidered in two reſpects: *firſt*, As it ſignifies a thankful approbation of God's *general* providence over the world: *ſecondly*, As it ſignifies a thankful acceptance of his *particular* providence over us.

* *Firſt*, Every man is, by the firſt article of his creed, obliged to acknowledge the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, in his *general providence* over the world. He is to believe that it is the effect of God's great wiſdom and goodneſs, that the world itſelf was formed at ſuch a particular time, and in ſuch a manner: that the general order of nature, the whole frame of things, is contrived and formed in the beſt manner. He is to believe that God's providence over ſtates and kingdoms, times and ſeaſons, is all for the beſt: that the revolutions of ſtate, and changes of empire, the riſe and fall of monarchies, perſecutions, wars, famines and plagues, are all permitted, and conducted by God's providence, to the general good of man in this ſtate of trial.

A good man is to believe all this, with the ſame fullneſs of aſſent, as he believes that God is in every place, tho' he neither ſees, nor can comprehend the manner of his preſence.

* This is a noble magnificence of thought, a true greatneſs of mind, to be thus affected with

God's general providence, admiring and magnifying his wiſdom in all things; never murmuring at the courſe of the world, or the ſtate of things, but looking upon all around, at heaven and earth, as a pleaſed ſpectator; and adoring that inviſible hand, which gives laws to all motions, and over-rules all events to ends ſuitable to the higheſt wiſdom and goodneſs.

6. It is very common for people to allow themſelves great liberty in finding fault with ſuch things, as have only God for their cauſe.

* Every one thinks he may juſtly ſay, what a *wretched, abominable climate* he lives in. This man is frequently telling you, what a *diſmal, curſed* day it is, and what intolerable *ſeaſons* we have. Another thinks it is hardly worth his while to live in a world ſo full of changes and revolutions. But theſe are tempers of great impiety, and ſhew that religion has not yet its ſeat in the heart.

It ſounds indeed much better to murmur at the courſe of the world, than to murmur at providence; to complain of the ſeaſons and weather, than to complain of God; but if theſe have no other cauſe but God, it is a poor excuſe to ſay, that you are only angry at the things, but not at the cauſe and director of them.

How *ſacred* the whole frame of the world is, how all things are to be conſidered as God's, and referred to him, is fully taught by our bleſſed Lord in the caſe of *oaths: But I ſay unto you, ſwear,*

ſwear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his foot-ſtool; neither by Jeruſalem, for it is the city of the great king; neither ſhalt thou ſwear by thy head, becauſe thou canſt not make one hair white or black, Matt. v. 37. That is, becauſe the whiteneſs or blackneſs of thy hair is not thine, but God's.

* Here you ſee all things in the whole order of nature, from the higheſt heavens to the ſmalleſt hair, are to be conſidered, not ſeparately as they are in themſelves, but as in ſome relation to God. And if this be good reaſoning, thou ſhalt not ſwear by the *earth*, a *city*, or thy *hair*, becauſe theſe things are God's, and in a certain manner belong to him; is it not the ſame reaſoning to ſay, Thou ſhalt not murmur at the *ſeaſons* of the earth, the *ſtates* of cities, and the change of *times*, becauſe all theſe things are in the hands of God, have him for their author, are directed and governed by him to ſuch ends as are moſt ſuitable to his wiſe providence?

* For whoſo murmurs at the courſe of the world, murmurs at God that governs the courſe of the world. Whoſo repines at *ſeaſons* and *weather*, and ſpeaketh impatiently of times and events, repines and ſpeaks impatiently of God, who is the ſole Lord and Governor of *times*, *ſeaſons*, and *events*.

7. * As therefore when we think of God himſelf, we are to have no ſentiments but of praiſe-

and thankſgiving; ſo when we look at thoſe things which are under the direction of God, we are to receive them with the ſame tempers.

* And tho' we are not to think all things right, and juſt, and lawful, which the providence of God permits; for then nothing could be unjuſt, becauſe nothing is without his permiſſion; yet we muſt adore God in the greateſt public calamities, the moſt grievous perſecutions, as things that are ſuffered by God, like *plagues* and *famines*, for ends ſuitable to his wiſdom and glory in the government of the world.

* There is nothing more ſuitable to the piety of a reaſonable creature, or the ſpirit of a Chriſtian, than thus to approve, admire, and glorify God in all the acts of his general providence; conſidering the whole world as his particular family, and all events as directed by his wiſdom.

* Every one ſeems to conſent to this, as an undeniable truth, *That all things muſt be as God pleaſes.* And is not this enough to make every man pleaſed with them himſelf? And how can a man be a peeviſh complainer of any thing that is the effect of providence, but by ſhewing that his own *will* and *wiſdom* are of more weight with him, than the will and wiſdom of God? And what can religion be ſaid to have done for a man, whoſe heart is in this ſtate?

For

For if he cannot thank and praiſe God as well in calamities and ſufferings, as in proſperity and happineſs, he is as far from the piety of a Chriſtian, as he that only loves them that love him, is from the charity of a Chriſtian. For to thank God only for ſuch things as you like, is no more a proper act of piety, than to believe only what you ſee, is an act of faith.

8. Thus much concerning reſignation to the divine will, as it ſignifies a thankful approbation of God's *general providence:* it is now to be conſidered, as it ſignifies a *thankful* acceptance of God's *particular providence* over us.

* Every man is to conſider himſelf as a particular object of God's providence, under the ſame care and protection of God, as if the world had been made for him alone. It is not by chance that any man is born at ſuch a *time*, of ſuch *parents*, and in ſuch *place* and *condition*. It is as certain, that every *ſoul* comes into the body at ſuch a time, and in ſuch circumſtances, by the expreſs *deſignment* of God, according to *ſome purpoſes* of his will, and for ſome *particular ends*; this is as certain, as that it is by the expreſs deſignment of God, that ſome beings are *angels*, and others are *men*.

9. The ſcriptures aſſure us, it was by divine appointment, that our bleſſed Saviour was born at *Bethlehem*, and at ſuch a time. Now altho' it was owing to the dignity of his perſon, and the great importance of his birth, that thus much of

the divine counſel was declared to the world concerning the time and manner of it; yet we are as ſure from the ſame ſcriptures, that the *time* and *manner* of every man's coming into the world, is according to the *direction* of divine providence, and in *ſuch time*, and *place*, and *circumſtances*, as are directed and governed by God for *particular ends* of his wiſdom and goodneſs.

This we are as certain of from plain revelation, as we can be of any thing. * For if we are told, that not a *ſparrow falleth to the ground without our heavenly Father*, Can any thing more ſtrongly teach us, that much greater beings, ſuch as human ſouls, come not into the world without the care and direction of our heavenly Father? If it is ſaid, *The very hairs of your head are all numbered*, Is it not to teach us, that nothing, not the *ſmalleſt* things imaginable, happen to us by *chance?* But if the ſmalleſt things we can conceive, are declared to be under the divine direction, need we, or can we be more plainly taught, that the greateſt things of life, ſuch as the *manner* of our coming into the world, our *parents*, the *time*, and other *circumſtances* of our birth, and condition, are all according to the *direction*, and *appointment* of divine providence.

10. When the diſciples put this queſtion to our bleſſed Lord concerning the blind man, *Maſter, Who did ſin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?* He made this anſwer, *Neither hath this man ſinned, nor his parents; but that the*

the works of God should be made manifest in him, John ix. 2, 3. plainly declaring, that the particular circumstances of every man's birth, the body that he receives, and the state of life into which he is born, are appointed by a secret providence, which directs all things to their particular *times*, and *seasons*, and *manner* of existence, that the wisdom and works of God may be made manifest in them all.

As therefore it is certain, that all that is particular in our state, is the effect of God's particular providence over us, and intended for some particular ends, both of his glory and our own happiness, we are, by the greatest obligations, called upon to resign our will to the will of God in all these respects; thankfully approving and accepting every thing that is particular in our state; praising and glorifying his name for our birth of such *parents*, and in such *circumstances*; being fully assured, that it was for some reasons of infinite wisdom and goodness, that we were so born into such particular states of life.

11. If the man above-mentioned was born blind, that the *works of God might be manifested in him*, had he not great reason to praise God, for appointing him in such a particular manner to be the instrument of his glory? And if one person is born *here*, and another *there*; if one falls amongst *riches*, and another into *poverty*; if one receives his flesh and blood from these *parents*, and another from those, for as particular ends as the

the man was born blind; have not all people the greateſt reaſon to bleſs God, and to be thankful for their particular ſtate and condition, becauſe all that is particular in it, is as directly intended for the glory of God, and their own good, as the *particular blindneſs* of that man, who was ſo born, that the *works of God might be manifeſted in him?*

* How noble an idea does this give us of the divine omniſcience, preſiding over the whole world, and governing ſuch a long chain and combination of ſeeming accidents, to the common and particular advantage of all beings? So that all perſons, in ſuch a wonderful variety of cauſes and events, ſhould fall into ſuch particular ſtates, as were foreſeen and fore-ordained to their beſt advantage, and ſo as to be moſt ſerviceable to the wiſe and glorious ends of God's government of all the world!

12. * Had you been any thing elſe than what you are, you had, all things conſidered, been leſs wiſely provided for than you are now; you had wanted ſome circumſtances that are beſt fitted to make you happy yourſelf, and ſerviceable to the glory of God.

* Could you ſee all that which God ſees, all that happy chain of cauſes and motives which are to move and invite you to a right courſe of life, you would ſee ſomething to make you like that ſtate you are in, as fitter for you than any other.

*But as you cannot ſee this, ſo it is here that your *truſt* in God is to exerciſe itſelf, and render you

you as thankful for the happineſs of your ſtate, as if you ſaw every thing that contributes to it with your own eyes.

* But now, if this is the caſe of every man in the world, thus bleſſed with ſome particular ſtate that is moſt convenient for him, how reaſonable is it for every man to will that which God has already willed for him? And by a truſt in the divine goodneſs, thankfully adore that wiſe providence, which he is ſure has made the beſt choice for him of thoſe things which he could not chuſe for himſelf.

13. Every uneaſineſs at our own ſtate, is founded upon comparing it with that of other people; which is full as unreaſonable, as if a man in a *dropſy* ſhould be angry at thoſe that preſcribe different things to him, from thoſe which are preſcribed to people in *health*. For all the different ſtates of *life* are like the different ſtates of *diſeaſes*; and what is a remedy to one man, may be poiſon to another.

* So that to murmur becauſe you are not as ſome others are, is as if a man in one diſeaſe ſhould murmur that he is not treated like him that is in another; whereas, if he was to have his will, he would be killed by that which will prove the cure of another.

* It is juſt thus in the various conditions of life; if you complain at any thing in your ſtate, you may, for ought you know, be ſo ungrateful to

to God, as to murmur at that very thing which is to prove the cauſe of your ſalvation.

Had you it in your power to get that which you think it ſo grievous to want, it might perhaps be that very thing which would expoſe you to eternal damnation.

* So that, whether we conſider the infinite goodneſs of God, that cannot chuſe amiſs for us, or our own great ignorance of what is moſt adtageous to us, there can be nothing ſo reaſonable, as to have no will but that of God's, and deſire nothing for ourſelves, in our *perſons*, our *ſtate*, and *condition*, but that which the good providence of God appoints us.

14. * Farther, as the good providence of God introduces us into the world, into ſuch ſtates and conditions as are moſt convenient for us; ſo the ſame unerring wiſdom orders all events and changes in the whole courſe of our lives, in ſuch a manner, as to render them the fitteſt means to exerciſe and improve our virtue.

Nothing hurts us, nothing deſtroys us, but the ill uſe of that liberty with which God has entruſted us.

* We are as ſure that nothing happens to us by chance, as that the world itſelf was not made by chance; we are as certain that all things happen, and work together for our good, as that God is goodneſs itſelf. So that a man has as much reaſon to *will* every thing that happens to him, becauſe

cauſe God wills it, as to think that is wiſeſt which is directed by infinite wiſdom.

The providence of God is not more concerned in the government of *night* and *day*, and the variety of *ſeaſons*, than in the common courſe of events, that ſeem moſt to depend upon the meer wills of men. So that it is as ſtrictly right, to look upon all worldly changes, all the various turns in your own life, to be the effects of divine providence, as the riſing and ſetting of the ſun, or the alterations of the ſeaſons of the year. As you are therefore always to adore the wiſdom of God in the direction of theſe things; ſo it is the ſame reaſonable duty, always to magnify God, as an equal director of every thing that happens to you in the courſe of your own life.

15. There is nothing that ſo powerfully governs the heart, as a true ſenſe of God's *preſence*; and nothing ſo conſtantly keeps us under a lively ſenſe of the preſence of God, as this holy reſignation, which attributes every thing to him, and receives every thing as from him.

Could we ſee a *miracle* from God, how would our thoughts be affected with an holy awe and veneration of his preſence! But if we conſider every thing as God's doing, either by order or permiſſion, we ſhall then be affected with *common things*, as they would be who ſaw a *miracle*.

For as there is nothing to affect you in a miracle, but as it is the *action* of God, and beſpeaks his preſence; ſo when you conſider God, as *acting*

ing in all things, and all events, then all things will become venerable to you, like *miracles*, and fill you with the same awful sentiments of the divine presence.

16. Now you must not reserve the exercise of this pious temper to any particular times or occasions, or fancy how *resigned* you will be to God, if such or such trials should happen: for this is amusing yourself with the *notion* of resignation instead of the virtue itself.

Don't therefore please yourself with thinking, how piously you would act and submit to God in a *plague*, a *famine*, or *persecution*; but be intent upon the perfection of the present day; and be assured, that the best way of shewing a *true zeal*, is to make *little things* the occasions of *great piety*.

* Begin therefore in the smallest matters, and most ordinary occasions, and accustom your mind to the daily exercise of this pious temper, in the lowest occurrences of life. And when a *contempt*, an *affront*, a little *injury*, *loss*, or *disappointment*, or the smallest events of every day, continually raise your mind to God in proper acts of resignation, then you may justly hope, that you shall be numbered amongst those that are resigned, and thankful to God in the greatest trials and afflictions.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the excellency and greatneſs of a devout ſpirit.

1. I HAVE now finiſhed what I intended in this treatiſe. I have explained the nature of devotion, both as it ſignifies a life devoted to God, and as it ſignifies a regular method of prayer. I have now only to add a word or two in recommendation of a life governed by this Spirit.

And becauſe in this *polite* age, we have ſo *lived away* the ſpirit of devotion, that many ſeem afraid even to be ſuſpected of it, imagining *great devotion* to be great *bigotry*; that it is founded in *ignorance* and *poorneſs* of ſpirit; and that *little*, *weak*, and *dejected* minds, are generally the greateſt proficients in it.

It ſhall here be ſhewn, that great devotion is the *nobleſt* temper of the *greateſt* and *nobleſt* ſouls; and that they who think it receives any advantage from *ignorance*, are themſelves entirely ignorant of the nature of devotion, the nature of God, and the nature of themſelves.

People of *fine parts* and *learning*, or of great knowledge in *worldly matters*, may perhaps think it hard to have their *want* of devotion charged upon their *ignorance*. But if they will be content to be tried by reaſon and ſcripture, it may ſoon be made appear, that a *want* of devotion, wherever

wherever it is, either amongſt the learned or unlearned, is founded in *groſs ignorance*, and the *greateſt blindneſs* and *inſenſibility* that can happen to a rational creature.

And that devotion is ſo far from being the effect of a *little* and *dejected* mind, that it muſt and will be always *higheſt* in the moſt *perfect* natures.

2. And *firſt*, Who reckons it a ſign of a *poor*, *little* mind, for a man to be full of *reverence* and *duty* to his parents, to have the trueſt *love* and *honour* for his *friend*, or to excel in the *higheſt inſtances* of gratitude to his benefactor?

Are not theſe tempers, in the *higheſt* degree, in the moſt exalted and perfect minds?

And yet what is *high devotion*, but the higheſt exerciſe of theſe tempers, of *duty*, *reverence*, *love*, *honour*, and *gratitude* to the amiable, glorious *parent*, *friend*, and *benefactor* of all mankind?

Is it a true greatneſs of mind, to reverence the authority of your parents, to fear the diſpleaſure of your friend, to dread the reproaches of your benefactor; and muſt not this *fear*, and *dread*, and *reverence*, be much more juſt, and reaſonable, and honourable, when they are in the *higheſt degree* towards God?

So that as long as *duty* to parents, *love* to friends, and *gratitude* to benefactors, are thought great and honourable tempers, devotion, which is nothing elſe but duty, love, and gratitude to God,

God, muſt have the higheſt place amongſt our higheſt virtues.

If a *prince*, out of his *mere goodneſs*, ſhould ſend you a pardon by one of his *ſlaves*, would you think it a part of your duty to receive the *ſlave* with marks of *love*, *eſteem*, and *gratitude*, for his kindneſs of bringing you ſo great a gift, and at the ſame time think it a *meanneſs* and *poorneſs* of ſpirit, to ſhew *love*, *eſteem*, and *gratitude* to the prince, who of his own goodneſs freely ſent you the pardon?

And yet this would be as reaſonable, as to ſuppoſe that love, eſteem, honour, and gratitude, are *noble tempers*, and inſtances of a *great ſoul*, when they are paid to our fellow-creatures; but the effects of a poor, ignorant mind, when they are paid to God.

3. Even that part of devotion which expreſſes itſelf in *ſorrowful* confeſſions, and *penitential* tears of a broken and contrite heart, is very far from being any ſign of a *little* and *ignorant* mind.

For who does not acknowledge it an inſtance of an *ingenuous*, *generous*, and *brave* mind, to acknowledge a fault, and aſk pardon for any offence? And are not the *fineſt* and *moſt improved* minds, the moſt remarkable for this excellent temper?

Is it not alſo allowed, that the *ingenuouſneſs* and *excellence* of a man's ſpirit is much ſhewn, when his ſorrow and indignation at himſelf riſes in proportion to the folly of his crime, and the

goodneſs

goodneſs and *greatneſs* of the perſon he has offended?

Now if things are thus, then the *greater* any man's mind is, the more he *knows* of God and himſelf, the more will he be diſpoſed to proſtrate himſelf before God in all the *humbleſt acts* and expreſſions of repentance.

And the greater the *generoſity* and *penetration* of his mind is, the more will he indulge a *paſſionate, tender* ſenſe of God's juſt diſpleaſure; and the more he knows of the greatneſs, the goodneſs, and perfection of the divine nature, the fuller of ſhame and confuſion will he be at his own ſins and ingratitude.

And on the other hand, the more *dull* and *ignorant* any ſoul is, the more *baſe* and *ungenerous*, the more *ſenſeleſs* it is of the goodneſs of God, the more averſe to *humble confeſſion* and *repentance*.

Devotion therefore is ſo far from being beſt ſuited to *little, ignorant* minds, that a *true elevation* of ſoul, a *lively ſenſe* of honour, and *great knowledge* of God and ourſelves, are the greateſt *helps* that our devotion hath.

4. On the other hand, it ſhall be made appear, that *indevotion* is founded in the moſt exceſſive ignorance.

And, *firſt*, Our bleſſed Lord and his apoſtles were eminent inſtances of great devotion. Now if we will grant, (as all Chriſtians muſt grant) that their great devotion was founded in a true knowledge of the nature of devotion, the nature

of

of God, and the nature of man, then it is plain, that all thoſe that are inſenſible of devotion, are in this exceſſive ſtate of ignorance; they neither know God, nor themſelves, nor devotion.

Again, how comes it that moſt people have recourſe to devotion, when they are in ſickneſs, diſtreſs, or fear of death? Is it not becauſe this ſtate ſhews them *more* of the want of God, and their own weakneſs, than they perceive at other times? Is it not becauſe their approaching end, *convinces* them of ſomething which they did not *half perceive* before?

Now if devotion, at theſe ſeaſons, is the effect of a *better knowledge* of God and ourſelves, then the neglect of devotion at other times is owing to ignorance of God and ourſelves.

5. Farther, as indevotion is ignorance, ſo it is the moſt *ſhameful* ignorance, and ſuch as is to be charged with the *greateſt folly*.

This will fully appear to any one that conſiders by what rules we are to judge of the excellency of any knowledge, or the ſhamefulneſs of any ignorance.

Now *knowledge* itſelf would be no *excellence*, nor ignorance any *reproach* to us, but that we are *rational* creatures.

It follows plainly, that knowledge which is moſt *ſuitable* to our rational nature, and which moſt concerns us, as ſuch, to know, is our *higheſt*, *fineſt* knowledge; and that ignorance which relates to things that are moſt *eſſential* to us, as rational

rational creatures, and which we are moſt concerned to know, is, of all others, the moſt *groſs* and *ſhameful* ignorance.

6. If a *gentleman* ſhould fancy that the *moon* is no bigger than it appears to the *eye*, that it ſhines with its *own light*, that all the *ſtars* are only ſo many ſpots of light; if after reading books of *aſtronomy*, he ſhould ſtill continue in the ſame opinion, moſt people would think he had but a poor apprehenſion.

But if the ſame perſon ſhould think it better to provide for a *ſhort life* here, than to prepare for a *glorious eternity* hereafter; that it was better to be *rich*, than to be *eminent* in piety, his *ignorance* and *dulneſs* would be too great to be compared to any thing elſe.

That is the moſt clear and improved underſtanding, which *judges* beſt of the *value* and *worth* of things; all the reſt is but the capacity of an *animal*; it is but meer *ſeeing* and *hearing*.

If a man had *eyes* that could ſee beyond the *ſtars*, or pierce into the heart of the earth, but could not ſee the things that were before him, or diſcern any thing that was ſerviceable to him, we ſhould reckon that he had but a very *bad ſight*.

If another had *ears* that received ſounds from the world in the *moon*, but could hear nothing that was ſaid or done upon earth, we ſhould look upon him to be as *bad* as *deaf*.

In like manner, if a man has a *memory* that can retain a great many things, if he has a *wit* that

that is *ſharp* and *acute* in arts and ſciences, but has a *dull*, *poor* apprehenſion of his *duty* and *relation* to God, of the *value* of piety, or the *worth* of moral virtue, he may very juſtly be reckoned to have a *bad underſtanding*. He is but like the man that can only *ſee* and *hear* ſuch things as are of no benefit to him.

7. To proceed: We know how our bleſſed Lord acted in an human body; it was *his meat and drink to do the will of his Father which is in heaven*.

And if any number of heavenly ſpirits were to leave their habitations in the light of God, and be for awhile united to human bodies, they would certainly tend towards God in all their actions, and be as heavenly as they could, in a ſtate of fleſh and blood.

They would certainly act in this manner, becauſe they would know that God was the *only good* of all ſpirits; and that whether they were *in* the body, or *out* of the body, in *heaven* or on *earth*, they muſt have every degree of their greatneſs and happineſs from God alone.

All human ſpirits therefore, the *more exalted* they are, the more they *know* their divine original, the *nearer* they come to heavenly ſpirits, the more will they live to God in all their actions, making their whole life a *ſtate of devotion*.

Devotion therefore is the greateſt ſign of a great and noble *genius*; it ſuppoſes a ſoul in

its *higheſt ſtate* of knowledge; and none but *little* and *blinded* minds, that are ſunk into *ignorance* and *vanity*, are deſtitute of it.

8. If a human ſpirit ſhould imagine ſome *mighty prince* to be greater than God, we ſhould take it for a poor ignorant creature; all people would acknowledge ſuch an imagination to be the height of ſtupidity.

But if this ſame *human ſpirit* ſhould think it better to be devoted to ſome mighty *prince*, than to be devoted to God, would not this ſtill be a greater proof of a poor, ignorant, and blinded nature?

Yet this is what all people do, who think any thing *better*, *greater*, or *wiſer* than a devout life.

So that which way ſoever we conſider this matter, it plainly appears, that devotion is an inſtance of *great judgment*, of an *elevated nature*; and the want of *devotion* is a certain proof of the want of *underſtanding*.

The greateſt ſpirits of the Heathen world, ſuch as *Pythagoras*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Epictetus*, *Marcus Antoninus*, owed all their greatneſs to the ſpirit of devotion.

They were full of God; their wiſdom and deep contemplations tended only to deliver men from the vanity of the world, the ſlavery of bodily paſſions, that they might act as *ſpirits* that came from God, and were ſoon to return to him.

9. Let

9. Let *libertines* but grant that there is a God, and a providence, and then they have granted enough to juſtify the wiſdom, and ſupport the honour of devotion.

For if there is an infinitely wiſe and good Creator, in whom we live, move, and have our being, whoſe providence governs all things in all places, ſurely it muſt be the higheſt act of our *underſtanding* to conceive rightly of him; it muſt be the nobleſt inſtance of *judgment*, the moſt exalted temper of our nature, to worſhip and adore this univerſal providence, to conform to its laws, to ſtudy its wiſdom, and to live and act every where, as in the preſence of this infinitely good and wiſe Creator.

Now he that lives thus, lives in the ſpirit of devotion.

And what can ſhew ſuch great parts, and ſo fine an underſtanding, as to live in this temper?

For if God is *wiſdom*, ſurely he muſt be the wiſeſt man in the world, who *moſt* conforms to the wiſdom of God, who *beſt* obeys his providence, who enters *fartheſt* into his deſigns, and does all he can, that God's will may be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.

A devout man makes a true uſe of his reaſon; he ſees through the *vanity* of the world, diſcovers the *corruption* of his nature, and the *blindneſs* of his paſſions. He lives by a *law* which is not viſible to *vulgar eyes*; he enters into the world of *ſpirits*; he compares the greateſt things, ſets *eternity* againſt time; and

chuſes rather to be for ever great in the preſence of God when he dies, than to have the greateſt ſhare of worldly pleaſures whilſt he lives.

11. *Laſtly*, *Courage* and *bravery* are words of a great ſound, and ſeem to ſignify an *heroic* ſpirit; but yet *humility*, which ſeems to be the *loweſt*, *meaneſt* part of devotion, is a more certain argument of a *noble* mind.

For humility contends with greater enemies, is more conſtantly engaged, more violently aſſaulted, ſuffers more, and requires greater courage to ſupport itſelf, than any inſtances of worldly bravery.

A man that dares be poor and contemptible in the eyes of the world, to approve himſelf to God; that reſiſts and rejects all human glory; that oppoſes the clamour of his paſſions, that meekly puts up all injuries, and dares ſtay for his reward till the inviſible hand of God gives to every one their proper places, endures a much *greater trial*, and exerts a *nobler fortitude*, than he that is bold and daring in the fire of battle.

For the boldneſs of a ſoldier, if he is a ſtranger to the ſpirit of devotion, is rather *weakneſs* than fortitude; it is at beſt but *mad paſſion*, and heated ſpirits, and has no more true valour in it than the fury of a *tyger*.

Reaſon is our *univerſal law*, that obliges us in all places, and all times; and no actions have any honour, but ſo far as they are inſtances of our obedience to reaſon.

And

And it is as *baſe* to be bold and daring againſt the principle of reaſon and juſtice, as to be bold and daring in *lying* and *perjury*.

Would we therefore exerciſe a *true fortitude*, we muſt do all in the ſpirit of *devotion*, be valiant againſt the corruptions of the *world*, and the luſts of the *fleſh*, and the temptations of the *devil*: for to be daring and courageous againſt theſe enemies, is the nobleſt bravery that an human mind is capable of.

I have made this digreſſion for the ſake of thoſe, who think great devotion to be *bigotry* and *poorneſs* of *ſpirit*; that by theſe conſiderations they may ſee, how *poor* and *mean* all other *tempers* are, if compared to it: that they may ſee all worldly attainments, whether of greatneſs, wiſdom, or bravery, are but *empty ſounds*; and there is nothing *wiſe*, or *great*, or *noble*, in an *human ſpirit*, but rightly to *know*, and heartily *worſhip* and *adore* the great God, that is the *ſupport* and *life* of all ſpirits, whether in *heaven*, or on *earth*.

An extract from the Rev. Mr. LAW's

LATER WORKS.

An extract from the Case of Reason, or Natural Religion, fairly and fully stated. In answer to a book, entitled *Christianity as Old as the Creation.*

The Introduction, shewing the state of the Controversy.

THE infidelity which is now openly declared for, pretends to support itself upon the *sufficiency*, *excellency*, and *absolute perfection* of reason, or natural religion.

The author with whom I am engaged, makes no attempt to invalidate the *historical evidence* on which Christianity is founded; but by arguments drawn from the nature of God, and natural religion, pretends to prove that no religion can come from God, which teaches any thing more than that, which is fully manifest to all mankind by the *mere light* of nature.

His chief principles may be reduced to these following propositions.

1. That

1. That human reaſon, or natural light, is the *only means* of knowing all that God requires of us.

2. That reaſon, or natural light, is ſo full, ſufficient, plain, and certain a rule in all religious duties, that no external divine revelation can add any thing to it, or require us to believe or practiſe any thing, that was not as fully known before. A revelation, if ever made, can only declare thoſe very *ſame* things *externally*, which were before equally declared by the *internal* light of nature.

3. That this muſt be the caſe of natural and revealed religion, unleſs God be an arbitrary being. For if God be not an arbitrary being, but acts according to the reaſon and nature of things; then he can require nothing of us by revelation, but what is already required by the nature and reaſon of things. And therefore, as he expreſſes it, *reaſon and revelation muſt exactly anſwer one another like two tallies* †.

4. That whatever is at any time admitted as matter of religion, that is not manifeſt from the reaſon of the thing, and plainly required by the light of nature, is groſs ſuperſtition.

5. That it is inconſiſtent with the divine perfections, to ſuppoſe, that God can by an external revelation give any religious knowledge, at *any time*, to *any people*, which was not equally given at *all* times, and to *all* people.

† Page 60.

This is the ſtate of the controverſy. As to the railing accuſations, which this author pours out, at all adventures, upon the clergy, I ſhall wholly paſs them over; my intention being only to appeal to the reaſon of the reader, and to add nothing to it, but the ſafe, unerring light of divine revelation.

CHAP. I.

Enquiring, whether there be any thing in the nature *and* condition *of man, to* oblige *him to think, that he is not to admit of any doctrines or inſtitutions, as revealed from God, but ſuch as his own reaſon can prove to be neceſſary from the nature of things.*

I Begin with enquiring what there is to *oblige* a man to hold this opinion, becauſe if there is not ſome ſtrong and plain proof ariſing from the *nature* and *condition* of man, to *oblige* him thus to abide by the ſole light of his own reaſon; it may be ſo far from being a duty, which he owes to God, that it may be reckoned amongſt his moſt criminal preſumptions. And the pleading for this authority of his own reaſon; may have the guilt of pleading for his greateſt vanity. And if, as this writer obſerves, *ſpiritual pride be the worſt ſort of pride,* † a confident reliance upon our own reaſon, as having a right to determine all matters between God and man, if it ſhould

† Page 150.

ſhould prove to be a *groundleſs pretenſion*, bid fair to be reckoned the higheſt inſtance of the *worſt* kind of the worſt of ſins.

Every other inſtance of vanity, every degree of perſonal pride, and ſelf-eſteem, may be a pardonable weakneſs in compariſon of this. For how ſmall is that pride which only makes us prefer our own perſonal beauty or merit to that of our fellow-creatures, when compared with a ſelf-confiding reaſon, which is too haughty to adore any thing in the divine counſels, which it cannot fully comprehend; or to ſubmit to any directions from God, but ſuch as its own wiſdom could preſcribe? Thus much is certain, that there can be no *medium* in this matter. The claiming this authority to our own reaſon, muſt either be a very great duty, or among the greateſt of ſins.

If it be a *ſin* to admit of any *ſecrets* in divine providence, if it be a *crime* to aſcribe wiſdom and goodneſs to God in things we cannot comprehend: if it be a *baſeneſs* and *meanneſs* of ſpirit to believe that God can teach us *better* or *more* than we can teach ourſelves: if it be a *ſhameful apoſtacy* from the dignity of our nature, to ſubmit to any *myſterious providence* over us, to comply with any other methods of *homage* and *adoration*, than ſuch as we could of ourſelves contrive and juſtify; then it is certainly a great duty to aſſert and maintain this authority of our own reaſon.

On the other hand; if the profoundeſt humility towards God, be the higheſt inſtance of piety: if every thing within us and without us, if every thing we know of God, every thing we know of ourſelves preaches up humility to us, as the foundation of every virtue, as the life and ſoul of all holineſs: if *ſin* had its beginning from *pride*, and *hell* be the effect of it, if *devils* are what they are through ſpiritual pride and ſelf-conceit, then we have great reaſon to believe, that the claiming this authority to our reaſon, in oppoſition to the revealed wiſdom of God, is not a frailty of *fleſh* and *blood*, but that ſame ſpiritual pride which turned *angels* into *apoſtate* ſpirits.

Since therefore this appealing to our own reaſon, as the abſolutely *perfect rule* of all that ought to paſs between God and man, has an *appearance* of a pride of the *worſt* kind, and ſuch as unites us both in temper and conduct with the fallen ſpirits of darkneſs, it highly concerns every pleader on that ſide, to conſider what grounds he proceeds upon, and to aſk himſelf, what there is in the *ſtate* and *condition* of human nature, to oblige him to think, that nothing can be *divine* or *holy*, or *neceſſary*, in religion, but what *human* reaſon dictates?

I hope the reader will think this a fair ſtate of the caſe, and that all the light we can have in this matter, muſt ariſe from a thorough conſideration of the *ſtate* and *condition* of man in this world. If without

without revelation he is free from myſteries as a *moral* and *religious* agent, then he has ſome plea from his ſtate and condition to reject *revealed* myſteries.

But if in a ſtate of natural religion, he can't acknowledge a divine providence or worſhip God, without *as much* implicit faith, and ſubmiſſion of his reaſon, as any revealed myſteries require; then his *ſtate* and *condition* in the world, condemns his refuſal of any revelation ſufficiently atteſted to come from God. This enquiry therefore into the ſtate and condition of man, being ſo plainly the true point of the controverſy, I hope to obtain the reader's impartial attention to it.

Had mankind continued in a ſtate of *perfect innocence*, without ever failing in their duty either to God or man, yet even in ſuch a ſtate, they could never have known what God would or would not reveal to them, but by ſome expreſs revelation from him. And as God might intend to raiſe them to ſome higher, and unknown ſtate of perfection; ſo he might raiſe them to it by the revelation of ſuch things as their own reaſon, though uncorrupt, yet could not have diſcovered.

But if man, in a ſtate of *innocence*, could have no pretence to ſet himſelf againſt divine revelation, and make his own reaſon the *final judge* of what God could, or could not reveal to him; much leſs has he any pretence for ſo doing in his preſent ſtate of *ſin*, *ignorance*, and *miſery*. His

nature and *condition* is ſo far from furniſhing him with reaſons againſt revelation, againſt any *ſupernatural* help from God; that it ſeems to be inconſolable without it; and every circumſtance of his life prepares him to hope for terms of *mercy* and deliverance from his preſent guilt and miſery, not according to *ſchemes* of his *own* contrivance, not from his *own knowledge* of the *nature*, and *reaſon*, and *fitneſs* of things, but from ſome *incomprehenſible depth* of divine goodneſs.

For if ſin, and miſery, and ignorance, cannot convince us of our own weakneſs, cannot prepare us to accept of any *methods* of *atoning* for our guilt, but ſuch as our own diſordered reaſon can ſuggeſt, we are not far from the hardened ſtate of thoſe miſerable ſpirits, that make war againſt God.

For to inſiſt upon the *prerogative* of our own nature, as qualifying us to make our own peace with God, and to reject the *atonement* which he has provided for us, becauſe we eſteem it more fit and reaſonable, that our *own repentance* ſhould be ſufficient without it, is the ſame height of *pride* and *impiety*, as to affirm, that we have no need of any repentance at all.

For as mankind, if they had continued in a ſtate of *innocence*, could not have known how their innocence was to be rewarded, or what changes of ſtate God intended them for, but as revelation had diſcovered theſe things unto them: ſo after they were *fallen* into a ſtate of guilt and ſin, they could

could never know what *miſery* it would expoſe them to, or *when*, or *how*, or whether they were ever to be delivered from it, and made as happy as if they had *never* ſinned; theſe are things that nothing but a revelation from God could teach them.

So that for a ſinner to pretend to appoint the *atonement* for his own ſins, or to think himſelf able to tell what it *ought* to be, is as fooliſh and vain a preſumption, as if man in *innocence* ſhould have pretended to appoint his own method of being changed into a *cherub*.

The writers againſt revelation appeal to the *reaſon* and *nature* of things, as *infallibly* diſcovering every thing that a revelation from God can teach us.

Thus our author; *If the relations between things, and the fitneſs reſulting from thence, be not the ſole rule of God's actions, muſt not God be an arbitrary being? But if God only commands what the nature of things ſhew to be fit, it is ſcarce poſſible that men ſhould miſtake their duty; ſince a mind that is attentive can as eaſily diſtinguiſh fit from unfit, as the eye can beauty from deformity* †.

It is granted, that there is a fitneſs and unfitneſs of actions founded in the nature of things, and reſulting from the relations that perſons and things bear to one another. It is alſo granted, that the reaſonableneſs of moſt of the duties of children to their parents, of parents to their children,

† Page 30.

dren, and of men to men, is very apparent, from the relations they bear to one another; and that ſeveral of the duties which we owe to God, plainly appear to us, as ſoon as we acknowledge the relation that is between God and us.

But then, this *whole argument* proves directly the contrary to that which this author intended to prove by it.

I here therefore join with this author; I readily grant, that the nature, reaſon and relations of things and perſons, and the fitneſs of actions reſulting from thence, is the *ſole rule* of God's actions. And I appeal to this one common principle, as a ſufficient proof that a man cannot thus abide by the *ſole light* of his own reaſon, without contradicting the nature and reaſon of things, and denying this to be the *ſole rule* of God's actions.

* For if the *fitneſs* of actions is founded in the *nature* of things and perſons, and this fitneſs be the *ſole rule* of God's actions, it is certain that the rule by which he acts, muſt in many inſtances be *entirely* inconceivable by us, ſo as not to be known *at all*, and in no inſtances *fully* known, or *perfectly* comprehended.

* For if God is to act according to a *fitneſs founded* in the *nature* of things, and nothing can be fit for him to do, but what has its fitneſs founded in his own *incomprehenſible* nature, muſt he not neceſſarily act by a rule *above* all human comprehenſion?

comprehenſion? If he muſt govern his actions by his own nature, he muſt act by a *rule* that is juſt as *incomprehenſible* to us as his own nature.

* And we can be no farther *competent judges* of the *fitneſs* of the conduct of God, than we are competent judges of the divine nature; and can no more tell what is, or is not *infinitely wiſe* in God, than we can raiſe ourſelves to a *ſtate* of infinite wiſdom.

So that if the *fitneſs* of actions is founded in the *particular nature* of things and perſons, and the fitneſs of God's actions muſt ariſe from that which is *particular* to his nature, then we have from this argument, the *utmoſt certainty* that the *rule* or *reaſons* of God's actions muſt in many caſes be entirely inconceivable by us, and in no caſes perfectly apprehended; and for this very reaſon, becauſe he is not an *arbitrary being*, that acts by *mere will*, but is governed in every thing he does, by the reaſon and nature of things.

How miſtaken therefore is this author, when he argues after this manner. *If God requires things of us, whoſe fitneſs our reaſon can't prove from the nature of things, muſt he not be an arbitrary being?* For how can that prove God to be an arbitrary agent, which is the neceſſary conſequence of his not being arbitrary?

Suppoſing God not to be an *arbitrary being*, but to act conſtantly, as the perfections of his own nature make it *fit* and *reaſonable* for him to act, then there is an utter impoſſibility of our comprehending

prehending the reaſonableneſs and fitneſs of many of his actions.

* For inſtance; look at the *reaſon* of things, and the *fitneſs* of actions, and tell me how they moved God to create mankind in the ſtate and condition they are in. Nothing is more above the reaſon of men, than to explain the reaſonableneſs of God's providence in creating man of ſuch a *form* and *condition*, to go through *ſuch* a ſtate of things as human life is. No revealed myſteries can more exceed the comprehenſion of man, than the ſtate of human life itſelf.

Shew me according to what *fitneſs*, founded in the *nature* of things, God's infinite wiſdom was determined to form you in ſuch a manner, bring you into ſuch a world, and ſuffer and preſerve *ſuch a ſtate* of things, as human life is, and then you may have ſome pretence to believe no revealed doctrines, but ſuch as your own reaſon can deduce from the nature of things.

But whilſt your own *form*, whilſt *creation* and *providence* are depths which you cannot thus look into, 'tis ſtrangely abſurd to pretend, that God cannot reveal any thing to you as a matter of religion, except your own reaſon can ſhew its foundation in the nature and reaſon of things.

Revelation, you ſay, is on your account, and therefore you ought to ſee the *reaſonableneſs* and *fitneſs* of it. And don't you alſo ſay, that God has made you for your *own ſake*; ought you not therefore to know the reaſonableneſs and fitneſs

of

of God's forming you as you are? Don't you ſay, that providence is for the *ſake* of man? Is it not therefore fit and reaſonable, in the nature of things, that there ſhould be no *myſteries*, or *ſecrets*, in providence, but that man ſhould ſo ſee its methods, as to be able to prove all its ſteps to be conſtantly fit and reaſonable?

Don't you ſay, that the *world* is for the *ſake* of man; is it not therefore fit and reaſonable that man ſhould ſee, that the *paſt* and *preſent* ſtate of the world has been ſuch as the reaſon and fitneſs of things required it ſhould be?

* Now if the *imperfect* ſtate of human nature, the *calamities* of this life, the *diſeaſes* and mortality of human bodies, the *methods* of God's continual providence in governing human affairs, are things that as much concern us, as any methods of revealed religion; and if theſe are things that we cannot explain, according to any *fitneſs* or *unfitneſs* founded in the *nature* of things, but muſt believe a great deal more of the infinite wiſdom of God, than we can ſo explain; have we any reaſon to think, that God cannot, or ought not to raiſe us out of this unhappy ſtate of things, help us to an higher order of life, and exalt us to a nearer enjoyment of himſelf, by any means, but ſuch as our own poor reaſon can grope out of the nature and fitneſs of things?

Now what is the reaſon, that all is thus myſterious and unmeaſurable by human reaſon, in theſe matters ſo nearly concerning human nature? 'Tis becauſe God is not an *arbitrary being*, but

but does that which the *incomprehenſible perfections* of his own nature, make it *fit* and *reaſonable* for him to do. Do but grant that nothing can be *fit* for God to do, but what is *according* to his own *infinite perfections*: let but this be the *rule* of his actions, and then you have the *fulleſt* proof, that the fitneſs of his actions muſt be above our comprehenſion, who can only judge of a *fitneſs* according to our *own perfections*; and then we muſt be ſurrounded with myſtery for this very reaſon, becauſe God acts according to a *certain rule*, his own nature.

Again: What is the nature of a human ſoul, upon what *terms*, and in what manner it is *united* to the body, how far it is *different* from it, how far it is *ſubject* to it, what powers and faculties it *derives* from it; are things wherein the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* of God, and the *happineſs* of man are deeply concerned. Is it not neceſſary that theſe things ſhould have their foundation in the *reaſon* and *fitneſs* of things? And yet what natural reaſon, uninſpired from above, can ſhew that this *ſtate* of ſoul and body is founded therein?

* *Again:* The origin of *ſin* and *evil*, or how it entered into the world conſiſtently with the infinite wiſdom of God, is a myſtery of *natural religion*, which reaſon cannot unfold. For can we ſhew from the *reaſon* and *nature* of things, that it was *fit* and *reaſonable*, for the providence of God to ſuffer ſin to enter, and continue in the world? Here therefore the man of natural religion muſt drop his method of reaſoning from the

the fitneſs of things, and that in an article of the higheſt concern to the moral world, and be as mere a believer, as he that believes the moſt incomprehenſible myſtery of revealed religion.

Now as there have been in the ſeveral ages of the world, ſome *impatient*, *reſtleſs* and *preſuming* ſpirits, who, becauſe they could not in theſe points explain the juſtice of God's providence, have taken refuge in horrid *atheiſm*, ſo they made juſt the ſame *ſober uſe* of their reaſon, as our *modern unbelievers*, who becauſe they can't comprehend the *fitneſs* and *neceſſity* of certain Chriſtian doctrines, reſign themſelves up to an hardened *infidelity*. For it is juſt as reaſonable to allow of no myſteries in *revelation*, as to allow of no myſteries in *creation* and *providence*.

And whenever this writer ſhall think it proper to attack *natural* religion with as much freedom as he has *revealed*, he need not enter upon any *new* hypotheſis, or *different* way of reaſoning. For the ſame turn of thought, may ſoon find materials in the natural ſtate of man, for as large a bill of complaints againſt natural religion, and the myſteries of providence, as is here brought againſt revealed doctrines.

To proceed: If the *fitneſs of actions is founded in the nature and relation of beings*, then nothing can be fit for God to do, but ſo far as it is fit for the *Governor of all created beings*, whether on earth, or in any other part of the univerſe; and

and he cannot act fitly towards mankind, but by acting as is fit for the Governor of all beings.

* Now what is fit for the *Governor of all created* nature to do in this or that particular part of his creation, is as much above our reason to *tell*, as it is above our power to *govern* all beings. And how mankind ought to be governed, with relation to the whole creation, of which they are so small a part, is a matter equally above our knowledge; because we know not how they are a part of the whole, or what relation they bear to any other part, or how their state affects the whole, or any other part, than we know what beings the whole consists of.

Now there is nothing that we know with more certainty than that God is governor of the *whole*, and that mankind are a *part* of the whole; and that the uniformity and harmony of divine providence, must arise from his infinite wise government of the *whole*; and therefore we have the utmost certainty, that we are *vastly incompetent* judges of the fitness or unfitness of any methods that God uses in the government of so small a part of the universe, as mankind are.

Again: If the *fitness of actions is founded in the relations of beings to one another*, then the fitness of the actions of God's providence over mankind, must be in many instances altogether incomprehensible to us.

For the relation which God bears to mankind, as their *all-perfect Creator* and continual *Preserver*, is a relation that our reason conceives as imperfectly

fectly, and knows as little of, as it does of any of the divine attributes. When it compares it to that of a *father* and his children, a *prince* and his subjects, a *proprietor* and his property, it has explained it in the beſt manner it can, but ſtill has left it as much a *ſecret*, as we do the divine nature when we only ſay, it is *infinitely* ſuperior to every thing that is *finite*.

By the natural light of our reaſon we may know with certainty, ſeveral *effects* of this relation, as that it puts us under the care and protection of a wiſe, and juſt, and merciful providence, and demands from us the higheſt inſtances of humility, adoration and thankſgiving. But what it is in its own nature, what kind of ſtate, it is to exiſt in and by God, what it is to ſee by a *light* that is his, to act by a power from him, to live by a *life* in him; are things as incomprehenſible to reaſon, *left to itſelf*, as what it is to be in the *third heavens*, or to hear words that cannot be uttered.

But if this relation conſiſts in theſe *inconceivable* things, in a communication of *life*, *light* and *power*, if theſe are enjoyed in God, and in ourſelves, in a manner not to be explained by any thing that we ever heard, or ſaw; then we muſt neceſſarily be poor judges of what is fit for God to require of us, becauſe of this *relation*. It teaches us nothing but the ſuperficialneſs of our own knowledge, and the unfathomable depths of the divine perfections.

How

How little this writer has conſidered the nature of this *relation* between God and man, may be ſeen by the following paragraphs. *The Holy Ghoſt*, ſays he, *cannot deal with men as rational creatures, but by propoſing arguments to convince their underſtandings; and influence their wills, in the ſame manner as if propoſed by other agents.* As abſurd, as to ſay, God cannot *create* us as rational beings, unleſs he creates us in the ſame *manner*, as if we were created by other agents. For to ſuppoſe that other agents can poſſibly act upon our underſtanding, and will, in the *ſame manner* that God does; is as groſs an abſurdity, as to ſuppoſe that other agents can create us in the ſame manner that God creates us.

And to *confine* the manner of the Holy Ghoſt's acting upon us, to the manner of our acting upon one another by *arguments* and *ſyllogiſms*, is as great a weakneſs, as to *confine* the manner of God's creating us, to the manner of our making a *ſtatue* with *tools* and *inſtruments*.

But he proceeds and ſays, *For to go beyond this, would be making impreſſions on men, as a ſeal does on wax; to the confounding of their reaſon, and their liberty in chuſing; and the man would then be mearly paſſive, and the action would be the action of another being acting upon him, for which he could be no way accountable* †.

Here you ſee the Holy Spirit has but theſe two poſſible ways of acting upon men, it muſt either

† Page 199.

either only propoſe an argument, juſt as a man may propoſe one, or it muſt act like a *ſeal upon wax*,

I only aſk this writer, whether God communicates *life*, and *ſtrength*, and *underſtanding*, and *liberty of will* to us, only as men may communicate any thing to one another? or as a ſeal acts upon wax? If ſo, it may be granted, that the Holy Ghoſt cannot act upon us any other way.

But it muſt be affirmed, that we do, by a continual influx from God, enjoy all theſe powers, and receive the continuance of all theſe faculties from him, not as men receive things from one another, nor as *wax* receives the *impreſſion* of the *ſeal*, but in a way as much above our conception, as creation is above our power; if we have all our *power* of acting, by a *continual communication* from him, and yet as free agents, have all our *light* from him, and yet are *accountable intelligent* beings; then it muſt be great weakneſs to affirm, that the Holy Ghoſt cannot act upon us in the ſame manner: for it would be ſaying, God cannot act upon us as he does act upon us.

The ſhort of the matter is this. Either this *writer* muſt affirm, that our *rational nature*, our *underſtanding faculties*, our *power* of action, our *liberty* of will, muſt *neceſſarily* ſubſiſt without the *continual action* of God upon them, or elſe he muſt

muſt grant, that God can *act* upon our *underſtandings* and *wills* without making us as *merely paſſive* as the wax under the ſeal.

This writer ſays, *Though the relation we ſtand in to God, is not artificial, as moſt are amongſt men —yet this does not hinder, but that we may know the end he had in being related to us as Creator and Governor, and what he requires of his creatures and ſubjects.* But how are we to know this? *This*, ſays he, *the divine nature*, which *contains in it all perfection and happineſs, plainly points out to us* †.

If he had ſaid, ſince God muſt act over us as Creator and Governor, according to his own infinite *perfection and happineſs*, therefore his conduct over us may be *very myſterious*, he had drawn a *plain* concluſion. But he proves all to be plain, becauſe God is to govern us according to ſomething that is not plain, according to his own *incomprehenſible nature*.

His argument therefore proceeds thus. God muſt govern us according to his own *infinite perfection and happineſs*; but we *do not know* what his infinite perfections and happineſs are:

Therefore we *plainly know* how he is to govern us.

Now if this writer is capable of taking ſuch an argument as this to be demonſtrative, it is no wonder

† Page 29.

wonder that all his principles of religion are founded upon demonſtration.

But if he knows no more of what ariſes from the *relation* between God and his creatures, than he has here demonſtrated, he might be very well content with ſome farther knowledge from divine revelation.

It is becauſe of this incomprehenſible relation between God and his creatures, that we are unavoidably ignorant of what God may juſtly require of us either in a ſtate of *innocence* or *ſin*. For as the fitneſs of actions between beings *related*, muſt reſult from their reſpective natures, ſo the incomprehenſibility of the divine nature, on which the relation between God and man is founded, makes it utterly impoſſible for mere natural reaſon to ſay, what *kind* of *homage*, or *worſhip*, he may *fitly* require of man in a ſtate of *innocence*; or what *different* worſhip and homage he may, or muſt require of men, as *ſinners*.

And to appeal to the infinite perfections of God, as *plainly pointing this out*, is the ſame extravagance, as to appeal to the *incomprehenſibility* of God as a plain proof of our comprehending what God is.

As to the obligations of moral or ſocial duties, which have their foundation in the ſeveral relations we bear to one another, theſe are the ſame in the ſtate of *innocence* or *ſin*, and we know that we truly act according to the divine will, when

we act according to what these relations require of us.

But the question is, What distinct kind of *homage*, or *service*, or *worship*, God may require us to render to him, either in a state of *innocence* or *sin*, on account of that relation he bears to us as an all-perfect Creator and Governor?

But this is a question that God alone can resolve.

Human reason cannot enter into it, it has no principle to proceed upon in it. For as the *necessity* of divine worship, so the *particular manner* of it, must have its reason in the divine nature.

Sacrifice, if considered only as an *human invention*, could not be proved to be a reasonable service. Yet considered as a *divine institution*, it would be the greatest folly not to receive it as a reasonable service. For as we could see no reason for it, if it was of human invention, so we should have the greatest reason to comply with it because it was of divine appointment. Not as if the divine appointment altered the *nature* and *fitness* of things; but because nothing has the *nature* and *fitness* of divine worship, but as it is of divine appointment.

Man therefore, had he continued in a state of innocence, and without revelation, might have lived in an awful fear, and pious regard of God, and observed every duty both of moral and civil life,

life, as an act of obedience to him. But he could have no foundation either to invent any particular *manner* of divine worſhip himſelf, or to reject any that was appointed by God, as *unneceſſary*. It would have been ridiculous to have pleaded his innocence, as having no need of a divine worſhip. For who can have greater reaſon, or be fitter to worſhip God, than innocent beings? It would have been more abſurd, to have objected the ſufficiency of their reaſon; for why ſhould men reject a *revealed manner* of divine worſhip, becauſe God had given them reaſon of their own, ſufficient for the duties of ſocial and civil life?

And as reaſon in a ſtate of innocence and perfection, could not have any pretence to appoint the manner of divine worſhip, ſo when the ſtate of innocence was changed for that of ſin, it became more difficult for bare reaſon to know what kind of worſhip could be acceptable to God from ſinners.

For what the *relation* betwixt God and ſinners makes it fit for God to require or accept of them, cannot be determined by human reaſon.

This is a *new ſtate*, and the foundation of a *new relation*, and nothing can be fit for God to do in it, but what has its *fitneſs reſulting* from it. We have nothing to help our conceptions of the fore-mentioned *relative characters* of God, as our *Governor* and *Preſerver*, but what we derive from our idea of human *fathers* and *governors*:

which idea only helps us to comprehend theſe *relations*, juſt as our idea of human power helps us to comprehend the *omnipotence* of God. For a father or governor, no more repreſents the *ſtate* of God as our *Governor* and *Preſerver*, than our living in our father's *family*, repreſents the *manner* of our living in God.

Theſe relations are both very plain, and very myſterious; they are very plain, as to the *reality* of their exiſtence; and highly myſterious and inconceivable, as to the *manner* of their exiſtence.

That which is *plain*, in theſe relative characters of God, plainly ſhews our obligations to every inſtance of *duty*, *homage*, *love*, and *gratitude*.

And that which is *inconceivable* in them, is a ſolid foundation of that *profound humility*, *awful reverence*, *internal piety* and *tremendous ſenſe* of the divine Majeſty, with which devout perſons think of God, and aſſiſt at the *offices* of religion. Which excites in them a higher zeal for doctrines and inſtitutions of divine revelation, than for all things human; that fills them with reverence for all *things*, places, and offices, that are either by divine or human authority, appointed to aſſiſt their deſired intercourſe with God.

And if ſome people, by a *long* and *ſtrict* attention to *reaſon*, and the *fitneſs* and *unfitneſs* of things, have at laſt arrived at a demonſtrative certainty,

certainty, that all these sentiments of piety and devotion, are mere *bigotry*, *superstition*, and *enthusiasm*; I shall only now observe, that *youthful extravagance*, *passion*, and *debauchery*, by their own *natural tendency*, without the assistance of any other guide, seldom fail of making the same discovery. And though it is not reckoned any reflection upon *great wits*, when they hit upon the same thought, yet it may seem some disparagement of that *reason* and *philosophy*, which teaches *old men* to think the same of religion, that *passion* and *extravagance* teach the young.

To return: As there is no state in human life, that can give us a true idea of any of the forementioned relative characters of God, so this relative state of God towards sinners is still less capable of being comprehended by any thing observable in the relations, betwixt a judge and criminals, a *creditor* and his debtors, a *physician* and his patients, a father or prince, and their disobedient children and subjects.

For none of these states separately, nor all of them jointly considered, give us any full idea, either of the *nature* and *guilt* of sin or how God is to deal with sinners, on the account of the relation he bears to them.

To ask, whether *sin* hath solely the *nature* of an offence, against a prince or a father, and so is pardonable by mere goodness; whether it is like an *error* in a *road* or *path*, and so is entirely at an end, when the right path is taken;

whether its guilt hath the nature of a debt, and ſo is capable of being diſcharged, juſt as a debt is; whether it affects the ſoul, as a *wound* or *diſeaſe* affects the body, and ſo ought only to move God to act as a good phyſician? All theſe queſtions are as vain, as to aſk, whether knowledge in God is really *thinking*, or his nature a real *ſubſtance*. For as his knowledge and nature cannot be ſtrictly defined, but are capable of being ſignified by the terms *thinking* and *ſubſtance*, ſo the nature of ſin is not *ſtrictly repreſented* under any of theſe characters, but is capable of receiving *ſome repreſentation* from every one of them.

When ſin is ſaid to be an offence againſt God, it is to teach us, that we have infinitely more reaſon to dread it on *God's account*, than to dread any offence againſt our parents, or governors.

When it is compared to a *debt*, it is to ſignify, that our ſins make us accountable to God, not in the *ſame manner*, but with the ſame certainty, as a debtor is anſwerable to his creditor; and becauſe it has ſome likeneſs to a debt, that of ourſelves we are not able to pay.

When it is compared to a *wound*, or diſeaſe, it is not to teach us, that it may as juſtly and eaſily be healed as bodily wounds, but to help us to conceive the greatneſs of its evil; that, as diſeaſes bring death to the body, ſo

ſo ſin brings a worſe kind of death upon the ſoul.

Since therefore the *nature* and *guilt* of ſin can only ſo far be known, as to make it highly to be *dreaded*, but not ſo known as to be *fully* underſtood, by any thing we can compare to it:

Since the *relation* which God bears to *ſinners*, can only be ſo known, as to make it highly reaſonable to proſtrate ourſelves before him, in every inſtance of humility and penitence; but not ſo fully known as to teach us, in what manner, God muſt deal with us: it plainly follows, that if God is not an *arbitrary* being, but acts according to a *fitneſs reſulting* from this relation, he muſt, in this reſpect, act by a *rule* known only to himſelf, and ſuch as we cannot *poſſibly* ſtate from the *reaſon* and *nature* of things.

For if the nature of things, and the fitneſs of actions reſulting from their relations, is to be the rule of our reaſon, then *reaſon* muſt be here at a full ſtop, and can have no more knowledge to proceed upon, in ſtating the *nature*, the *guilt*, or proper *atonement* of ſin in men, than of ſin in *angels*.

For *reaſon* can no more tell us what the *guilt* of ſin is, what *hurt* it does us, how far it *enters* into, and *alters* our very nature, what *contrariety to*, and *ſeparation* from God, it neceſſarily brings upon us, or what *ſupernatural* means are, or are not, neceſſary to aboliſh it; our *reaſon*

can no more tell this, than our *ſenſes* can tell us, what is the *inward*, and what is the *outward* light of angels.

Aſk reaſon what *effect* ſin has upon the ſoul, and it can tell you no more, than if you had aſked, what effect the *omnipreſence* of God has upon the ſoul.

Aſk reaſon, and the nature of things, what is, or ought to be, the *true nature* of an atonement for ſin, how far it is like *paying* a *debt*, or *healing* a *wound*, or how far it is different from them? And it can tell you no more, than if you had aſked, what is the *true degree* of power that *preſerves* us in exiſtence, how far it is *like* that which at firſt created us, and how far it is *different* from it.

All theſe enquiries are, by the nature of things, made impoſſible to us, ſo long as we have no light but from our own natural capacities, and we cannot take upon us to be *philoſophers* in theſe matters, but by deſerting our reaſon, and giving ourſelves up to *viſion* and *imagination*.

And we have as much authority from the nature of things, to appeal to *hunger* and *thirſt*, and *ſenſual pleaſure*, to tell us *how* our ſouls ſhall live in the beatific preſence of God, as to appeal to our *reaſon* and *logic*, to demonſtrate how ſin is to be *atoned*, or the ſoul *prepared*, and *purified*, for future happineſs.

For God has no more given us our reaſon to *ſettle* the nature of an atonement for ſin; or to find

find out what can, or cannot, take away its guilt, than he has given us *ſenſes* and *appetites* to ſtate the nature, or diſcover the ingredients of future happineſs.

And he who rejects the *atonement* for ſins made by the Son of God, as *needleſs*, becauſe he cannot prove it to be *neceſſary*, is as extravagant, as he that ſhould deny that God created him by his *only Son*, becauſe he did not remember it. For our memory is as proper a faculty to tell us, whether God at firſt created us, by his only Son, as our *reaſon* is to tell us, whether we ought to be reſtored to God, with, or without the mediation of Jeſus Chriſt.

When therefore this writer ſays, *Can any thing be more evident, than that if doing evil be the only cauſe of God's diſpleaſure, the ceaſing to do evil, muſt take away that diſpleaſure?* †

* Juſt as if he had ſaid, if converſing with a *leper* has been the only cauſe of a man's getting a *leproſy*, muſt not departing from him, be the removal of the *leproſy?* For if any one, gueſſing at the *guilt* of ſin, and its *effects* on the ſoul, ſhould compare it to a *leproſy* in the body, he can no more ſay, that he has reached its *real*, *internal* evil, than he, that comparing the happineſs of heaven to a crown of glory, can be ſaid to have deſcribed its real happineſs.

This *writer* has no occaſion to appeal to the nature of things, if he can be thus certain about

† Page 4.

things, whose nature is not only obscure, but *impossible* to be known. For it is as impossible for him to know the *guilt* and *effects* of sin, as to know the shape of an angel. It is as impossible to know by the mere light of reason, what God's *displeasure* at sin is, what *separation* from sinners it implies, or how it *obliges* God to deal with them; as to know what the internal essence of God is. Our author therefore has here found the utmost degree of evidence, where it was *impossible* for him to have the *smallest degree* of knowledge.

If a man, having *murdered* twenty of his fellow-creatures, should afterward be sorry for it, and wish that he had a power to bring them to life again, or to create others in their stead, would his ceasing to kill, and wishing he had a power to create others in their stead, put him just in the *same state* with God, as if he had never murdered a man in his life? But unless this can be said, it cannot be said that repentance is sufficient to put a man in the *same state*, as if he never had sinned.

The writer has two more objections against the atonement for sin, made by Jesus Christ. *First*, as it is an *human sacrifice*, *which nature itself abhors*: and which was looked upon as the great abomination of idolatrous *Pagan* worship.

The *cruelty*, *injustice*, and *impiety*, of shedding human blood in the sacrifices of the *Pagans* is

is fully granted; but *reaſon* cannot thence bring the ſmalleſt objections againſt the ſacrifice of Chriſt.

For how can reaſon be more diſregarded, than in ſuch an argument as this? The *Pagans* were unjuſt, cruel, and impious, in offering human blood to their falſe gods; therefore the true God cannot receive any *human* ſacrifice, or allow any perſons to die, as a puniſhment for ſin.

For, if no human ſacrifice can be fit for God to receive, becauſe human ſacrifices, as parts of *Pagan* worſhip, were unjuſt and impious; then it would follow, that the *mortality*, to which all mankind are appointed by God, muſt have the *ſame cruelty* and *injuſtice* in it. Now that *death* is a puniſhment for ſin, and that all mankind are by death offered as a *ſacrifice* for ſin, is not only a doctrine of revealed religion, but the plain dictate of reaſon. But if reaſon muſt acknowledge the death of all mankind, as a ſacrifice for ſin, then it can have no juſt objection againſt the ſacrifice of Chriſt, *becauſe* it was *human*.

I need not take upon me to prove the *reaſonableneſs* of God's procedure in the *mortality* of mankind; revelation is not under any neceſſity of proving this; becauſe it is no difficulty that ariſes from revelation, but equally belongs to natural religion; and both of them muſt acknowledge it to be reaſonable; not becauſe it can be proved to be ſo from the nature of

things, but is to be believed to be ſo, by faith and piety.

But if natural religion, will not ſuffer us to think it *inconſiſtent* with the juſtice and goodneſs of God, to appoint all mankind victims to death on the account of ſin, then *natural* religion, can have no objection againſt the ſacrifice of Chriſt, as it is an *human ſacrifice.*

And all that *revelation* adds to *natural* religion, on the point of *human* ſacrifice, is only this; the knowledge of *one*, that gives *merit and effect*, to all the reſt.

Secondly, It is objected, that the atonement made by Jeſus Chriſt, repreſents God as puniſhing the *innocent* and acquitting the *guilty*; or, as puniſhing the innocent *inſtead* of the guilty.

But this proceeds all upon miſtake: for the atonement made by Jeſus Chriſt, though it procures pardon for the guilty, yet it does not acquit them, or excuſe them from any puniſhment, or ſuffering for ſin, which *reaſon could impoſe upon them.* Natural religion calls men to repentance for their ſins: the atonement made by Jeſus Chriſt does not acquit them from it, or pardon them without it; but calls them to a *ſeverer* repentance, than natural religion alone preſcribes.

God therefore does not by this proceeding, ſhew his *diſlike* of the *innocent* and his *approbation* of the *wicked.*

God

For how can God be thought to puniſh our bleſſed Saviour out of *diſlike*, if his ſufferings are repreſented of ſuch infinite merit with him? Or how can he ſhew thereby his *approbation* of the guilty, whoſe repentance is not *acceptable* to him, till recommended by the infinite merits of Jeſus Chriſt?

As to the fitneſs of our Lord's ſufferings, as God and man; and the *nature* and *degree* of their worth; reaſon can no more enter into this matter, or *prove* or *diſprove* any thing about it, than it can enter into the ſtate of the whole creation, and ſhew, how it could, or could not, be in the whole, better than it is.

For you may as well aſk any of your *ſenſes*, as aſk your *reaſon* this principal queſtion, *Whether any ſupernatural means be neceſſary for the atonement of the ſins of mankind?* Or, ſuppoſing it neceſſary, whether the *mediation*, *death*, and *interceſſion* of Jeſus Chriſt, as God and man, be that true ſupernatural means?

For as the fitneſs or unfitneſs of any *ſupernatural* means, for the atonement of ſin, muſt reſult from the *incomprehenſible relation* God bears to ſinners, as it muſt have ſuch *neceſſity*, and *dignity*, as this relation *requires*, it neceſſarily follows, that if God acts according to *this relation*, the *fitneſs* of his actions cannot be according to our comprehenſion.

Again: Suppoſing ſome *ſupernatural means* to be neceſſary, for deſtroying the guilt and power

of

of ſin; or that the *ſufferings*, and *interceſſion*, of the Son of God incarnate, is that true ſupernatural means, it neceſſarily follows, that a revelation of ſuch, or any other *ſupernatural* means, cannot poſſibly be made obvious to our reaſon and ſenſes, as the things of human life, or the tranſactions amongſt men are; but can only be ſo revealed, as to become juſt occaſions of our *faith*, *humility*, and *pious reſignation*, to the divine wiſdom and goodneſs.

For, to ſay that ſuch a thing is *ſupernatural*, is only ſaying, that it is ſomething, which, by the *neceſſary ſtate* of our own nature, we are as incapable of knowing, as we are incapable of ſeeing *ſpirits*.

If therefore ſupernatural things are by the letter of ſcripture ever revealed to us, they cannot be revealed to us as they are in their *own nature*: for if they could, ſuch things would not be *ſupernatural*.

If an *angel* could appear to us, as it is in its own nature, then we ſhould be *naturally* capable of ſeeing angels; but, becauſe our nature is not *capable* of ſuch a ſight; therefore, when *angels* appear to men, they muſt appear, not as they are in themſelves, but in ſome *human* or *corporeal* form.

It is juſt thus, when any *divine* matter is revealed by God; it can no more poſſibly be revealed to us, as it is in its *own nature*, than an *angel* can appear to us, as it is in its own nature; but

but ſuch ſupernatural matter can only be reveal-ed to us, by being repreſented to us, by its like-neſs to ſomething, that we already *naturally* know.

Thus revelation teaches us this *ſupernatural* matter; that Jeſus Chriſt is making *perpetual interceſſion for us in heaven*: for Chriſt's *real ſtate*, or *manner* of exiſtence with God in heaven, in regard to his church, cannot, as it is in its *own nature*, be deſcribed to us; it is in this reſpect ineffable, and incomprehenſible. And therefore, this high and inconceivable manner of Chriſt's exiſtence with God in heaven, in regard to his church, is revealed to us under an idea, that gives us the trueſt repreſentation of it, we are capable of.

But if any one ſhould thence infer, that the Son of God muſt therefore either be always upon his knees, or *proſtrate* in ſome humble form of a ſupplicant, he would make a very weak inference.

Becauſe this revealed idea of Chriſt, as a perpetual Interceſſor in heaven, is only a comparative repreſentation of ſomething, that cannot be *directly* and *plainly* known as it is in its own nature; and only teaches us, how to believe ſomething, though imperfectly, yet *truly* of an incomprehenſible nature.

Again: When it is by the letter of ſcripture revealed to us, that the bleſſed Jeſus is the one *Mediator* between God and man; that he is the *Atonement*, the *Propitiation*, and *Satisfaction* for our

our ſins: theſe expreſſions only teach us *as much* outward knowledge of ſo great a myſtery, as human language can repreſent. But they do not teach us the perfect nature of Chriſt's ſtate between God and ſinners. For that being a *ſupernatural* matter, cannot by any outward words be revealed to us as it is in its *own nature*, any more than the *eſſence* of God can be made *viſible* to our eyes of fleſh.

But theſe expreſſions teach us thus much with certainty, that there is in the *ſtate* of Chriſt between God and ſinners, ſomething infinitely and inconceivably beneficial to us; and *truly anſwerable* to all that we mean by *mediation*, *atonement*, *propitiation*, and *ſatisfaction*.

And though the *real*, *internal manner*, of this mediation and atonement, as it is in its own nature, is *incomprehenſible*, yet this does not leſſen our knowledge of the truth and certainty of it, any more than the *incomprehenſibility* of the divine nature, leſſens our certainty of its real exiſtence.

And as our idea of God, though conſiſting of incomprehenſible perfections, helps us to a real and certain knowledge of the divine nature; and though all myſterious, is yet the ſolid foundation of all piety; ſo our idea of Jeſus Chriſt, as our *Mediator* and *Atonement*, though it be incomprehenſible as to its real nature, yet helps us to a *certain* knowledge of Chriſt, as our *Mediator* and *Atonement*; and, though full of myſtery, is yet

yet full of motives to the higheſt piety, love, and gratitude unto God.

All objections therefore, raiſed from any difficulties about the nature of *atonements*, *propitiations*, and *ſatisfactions*, as theſe words are uſed in common language, are vain, and entirely groundleſs.

For all theſe objections proceed upon this ſuppoſition, that *atonement*, or *ſatisfaction*, when attributed to Jeſus Chriſt, ſignify neither more nor leſs, than when they are uſed as terms in *human laws* or in *civil* life; take away this ſuppoſition, and all objections are entirely removed with it.

To return: I have granted this writer his great principle, *That the relations of things and perſons, and the fitneſs reſulting from thence, is the ſole rule of God's actions:* and I have granted it upon this ſuppoſition, that it thence follows, that God muſt act according to his *own nature*; and therefore nothing could be fit for God to do, but what had the reaſon of its fitneſs in his own nature: and if ſo, then the *rule* of his actions could not fall within our comprehenſion. And conſequently, *reaſon alone*, could not be a competent judge of God's proceedings; or ſay, what God might, or might not, require of us: and therefore I have, plainly turned his main argument againſt himſelf, and made it fully confute that doctrine, which he intended to found upon it.

But though I have thus far, granted the *nature* and *relations* of things and beings, to be the rule of God's actions, becauſe that plainly ſuppoſes, that his *own nature* muſt be the rule of his actions; yet ſince our *author*, and other modern oppoſers of revealed doctrines of religion, hold it in another ſenſe, and mean by it, I know not what *eternal, immutable* reaſons and relations of things, *independent* of any being, and which are a *common rule and law of God and man*, I entirely declare againſt it, as an erroneous and groundleſs opinion.

Thus, when this writer ſays, *If the relations between things, and the fitneſs reſulting from thence, be not the ſole rule of God's actions, muſt he not be an arbitrary being?* As he here means ſome *eternal, immutable relations, independent* of God; ſo, to ſuppoſe, that God cannot be a *wiſe* and *good* being, unleſs ſuch eternal, independent relations, be the *ſole rule* of his actions, is as erroneous, as to affirm, that God cannot be *omniſcient*, unleſs *mathematical demonſtrations* be his *ſole manner* of knowing all things. And it is juſt as reaſonable to fix God's knowledge *ſolely* in mathematical demonſtrations, that we may thence be aſſured of his *infallible knowledge*, as to make I know not what independent relations of things, the *ſole rule* of his actions, that we may thence be aſſured, he is not *arbitrary*, but a wiſe and good being.

And we have as ſtrong reaſons to believe God

to

to be, in the higheſt degree, *wiſe* and *good*, without knowing on what, his wiſdom and goodneſs is *founded*; as we have to believe him to be *omniſcient*, and *eternal*, without knowing on *what* his *omniſcience* is founded; or to *what*, his eternity is owing. And we have the ſame reaſon to hold it a vain enquiry, to aſk what obliges God to be *wiſe* and *good*, as to aſk what obliges him to be *omniſcient*, or *eternal*.

And as it would be abſurd to aſcribe the *exiſtence* of God to *any cauſe*, or found it upon any *independent relations* of things, ſo it is the ſame abſurdity, to aſcribe the infinite wiſdom and goodneſs of God to *any cauſe*, or found them upon any independent relations of things.

Nor do we any more *loſe* the notion, or *leſſen* the certainty of the divine wiſdom and goodneſs, becauſe we cannot ſay on *what* they are founded, than we *loſe* the notion of God, or render his exiſtence *uncertain*, becauſe it cannot be founded on any thing.

And as in our account of the exiſtence of things, we are obliged to have recourſe to a being, whoſe exiſtence muſt not be aſcribed to *any cauſe* becauſe every thing cannot have a cauſe, no more than every thing can be created, ſo in our account of *wiſdom* and *goodneſs*, there is the ſame neceſſity of having recourſe to an infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, that never *began* to be, and that is as different as to its *manner* of exiſtence, from all other wiſdom and goodneſs, that have a beginning,

ginning, as the *exiſtence* of God is *different* from the exiſtence of the creatures.

* But if it be neceſſary to hold, that there is an infinite wiſdom and goodneſs that *never began* to be, then it is as neceſſary to affirm, that ſuch wiſdom and goodneſs can no more be *founded* upon the *relations* of things, than the *unbeginning exiſtence* of God can be *founded* upon the exiſtence of things. And to ſeek for any *reaſons* of a wiſdom and goodneſs that was always in the *ſame infinite* ſtate, is like ſeeking the cauſe of that which can have no cauſe, or aſking *what* it is that *contains* infinity.

* When therefore this writer ſaith, *Infinite wiſdom can have no commands, but what are founded on the unalterable reaſon of things*;† he might as juſtly have ſaid, an *infinite Creator* can have no power of creating, but what is founded on the *unalterable nature* of creatures.

* For the *reaſon* of things, is juſt as unalterable, as the *nature* of creatures. And if the reaſons and relations of things are nothing elſe but their *manner* of exiſtence, or the *ſtate* of their nature, certainly the relations of things muſt have the ſame *beginning*, and the ſame *alterable* or unalterable nature, as the things from whence they flow. Unleſs it can be ſaid, that a thing may exiſt in *ſuch a manner*, though it does not exiſt at all.

When

† Page 247.

When therefore he says again, *That the will of God is always determined by the nature and reason of things*;† It is the same as if he had said, the *omnipotence* of God is always determined by the *nature* of *causes* and *effects*. For as all causes and effects are what they are, and *owe* their *nature* to the omnipotence of God, so the relations of things are what they are, and owe their nature to the wisdom and will of God.

Nor does this dependance of the relations of things on the will of God, destroy the nature of relations, or make them doubtful, any more than the existence of things depending on the *power* of God, destroys the certainty of their existence, or renders it doubtful. For as God cannot make things to exist, and not to exist at the same time, though their existence depends upon his power, so neither can he make things to have such relations, and yet not to have such relations at the same time, though their relations depend upon his will.

So that the ascribing the relations of things to the will of God, brings no uncertainty to those duties of life, which flow from such relations, but leaves the state of nature with all its relations, and the duties which flow from them, in the greatest certainty, so long as nature itself is continued; and when that either *ceases entirely*, or is only *altered*, it is not to be wondered at, if all its relations cease, or are altered with it.

Our

† Page 65.

Our author says, *Dare any one say, that God's laws are not founded on the eternal reason of things?*†

*I dare say it with the same assurance, as that his *existence* is not founded on the *eternal existence* of things. And that it is the same extravagance to say, that God's laws are founded on the *eternal reasons* of things, as to say, that his *power* is founded on the *eternal capacities* of things. For the *capacities* of things have just the same *solidity* and *eternity*, as the relations of things have, and are just such *independent realities* as they are: and are just the same *proper materials* to found the omnipotence of God upon, as the relations of things are, to found his infinite wisdom upon.

And as we can say, that the *omnipotence* of God in preserving and supporting the creation, will certainly act *suitably* to itself, and *consistent* with that omnipotence which first made things be what they are, and put nature into such a state as it is in; so we can say, that the *infinite wisdom* of God in giving laws to the world, will act *suitably* to itself, and *consistent* with that wisdom which at first made the nature and relations of the rational world be what they are.

But then as the *omnipotence* of God, though it acts suitably to the state of the creation, and the nature of causes and effects, which it first ordained, yet cannot be said to be founded upon the nature of causes and effects, because neither causes nor effects have *any nature*, but what they owe to omni-

† Page 425.

omnipotence; so the infinite wisdom of God, though in giving laws to the world, it acts *suitably* to the natures and relations of rational beings, yet cannot be said to be *founded* upon such relations, because such relations are the *effects* of the divine wisdom, and owe their existence to it.

And the *reason* or *relations* of things shew God's *antecedent* wisdom, and are effects of it, just as the nature of *causes* and *effects* shew his *antecedent* power, and are the effects of it. And as he is infinitely powerful, but not from the nature of causes and effects; so he is infinitely wise, but not from the *reason* and *nature* of things.

Again; if God is *infinite* wisdom, then his wisdom cannot be founded on the relations of things, unless things *finite*, and relations that began to be, can be the foundation of that wisdom which is infinite, and could not begin to be.

Therefore to ask, *what* it is founded upon, when it can have no foundation upon *any thing*, is asking, what an *independent* being is dependent upon, or *how* that began, which could have no beginning?

And to ask the reason or foundation of *any one* of the divine attributes, is the same as asking the reason or foundation of them all. And to seek for the reason or foundation of all the divine attributes, is seeking for the cause of God's existence.

And as we do not come to God's existence, till we come to the *end* of *causes*, so nothing that is divine, can be attributed to any cause.

Nor

Nor is it any more a contradiction to say, there is something whose nature is without any cause or foundation of its existence, than to say, something exists without ever *beginning* to exist. For as nothing can have a beginning, but as it proceeds from some cause; so that which can have no beginning, can have no cause. If therefore the divine wisdom ever *began* to be *infinite*, and we could know when that beginning was, we should have some pretence to search for that, upon which its infinity was *founded*; but if it never could begin to be, then to seek for its reason, or foundation, is seeking for its beginning.

This writer affirms, that God's wisdom and goodness must be founded on the nature and reason of things, otherwise it could not be proved, that God was not an *arbitrary being*.

* Now to seek for reasons to prove that God is not an arbitrary being, that is, a being of the *highest freedom* and *independency*, that does every thing according to his *own will* and *pleasure*, is as vain, as to seek for reasons to prove, that *all things* are not the effect of his *will*. For if every thing besides God, received its existence from him; if every thing that exists, is the effect of his will, and he can do nothing, but because he wills the doing it, must he not be free and arbitrary in as *high a manner*, as he is powerful?

This *writer* says, *It is not in our power to love the deity, whilst we consider him to be an arbitrary being, acting out of humour and caprice.*†

† Page 31.

End

But if God's *will* is as *eſſentially* oppoſite to *humour* and *caprice*, as his *omnipotence* is to *weakneſs and inability*; then it is as abſurd to ſuppoſe, that God muſt act according to humour and caprice, becauſe he acts according to his own will, as to ſuppoſe that he muſt act with inability, becauſe he acts by his omnipotence.

And if the will of God, *as ſuch*, is in the higheſt ſtate of perfection, then we have the *higheſt reaſon* to love and adore God, becauſe he is arbitrary, and acts according to his *own all-perfect will*. And if it be aſked, what it is that makes the will of God *all-perfect*, it may as well be aſked, what it is that makes him omnipotent, or makes him to exiſt. For, as we have not found out a God, till we have found a being that has no *cauſe*; ſo we have not found the *will* of God, till we have found a *will*, that has no *mover*, or *director*, or *cauſe* of its perfection. For that *will* which never began to be, can no more be any thing, but what it is in itſelf, than it can begin to be.

That which makes people imagine, that *will alone* is not ſo adorable, is becauſe they conſider it as a blind imperfect faculty that wants to be directed. But what has ſuch a will as this to do with the *will* of God?

For if the will of God is as *perfect* a *will*, as his omniſcience is a *perfect knowledge*, then we are as ſure, that the will of God cannot want any direction, or *will* any thing amiſs, as we are, that

his omniſcience cannot need any information, or fall into any miſtake. And if the *will* of God wanted any direction or government, it is impoſſible it ſhould have it; for having no ſuperior, it could only be ſo governed, becauſe it *willed* it, and therefore muſt be always under its own government.

All the perfection therefore that can be aſcribed to God, muſt be aſcribed to his *will*, not as if it was the production of his will, (for nothing in God is produced) but as eternally inherent in it.

And as God's will has thus all the perfection of the divine nature, and has no rule, or reaſon, or motive to any goodneſs, that comes from it, but its own *nature* and *ſtate* in God: ſo this great will is the only law of all creatures, and they are all to obey and conform to it, for this reaſon, becauſe it is the will of God.

* Nothing has a *moral* reaſon, or fitneſs to be done, but becauſe it is the will of God that it ſhould be done.

* It may be aſked, Is there then no *reaſon* or *nature* of things? Yes; as certainly as there are things. But the nature and reaſon of things, conſidered *independently* of the divine will, have no more *obligation* in them, than a *divine worſhip* conſidered independently of, and without any regard to the *exiſtence* of God. For the *will* of God is as abſolutely neceſſary to found all *moral obligation* upon, as the exiſtence of God is neceſſary to be the foundation of religious worſhip. And the

the fitneſs of moral obligations, without the *will* of God, is only like the fitneſs of *religious* worſhip without the *exiſtence* of God.

And it is as juſt to ſay, that he deſtroys the *reaſon* of religion, who founds it upon the nature and exiſtence of God, as to ſay, he ſaps the foundation of moral obligations, who founds them upon the will of God. And as religion cannot be ſolidly defended, but by ſhewing its connexion with, and dependence upon God's exiſtence; ſo neither can moral obligations be aſſerted with reaſon, but by ſhewing them to be the will of God.

It may again be aſked, Can God make that fit in itſelf, which is in *itſelf abſolutely* unfit to be done?

This queſtion conſiſts of improper terms. For God's will no more makes actions to be fit *in themſelves*, than it makes *things* to exiſt *in, or of themſelves*. No things, nor any actions have any *abſolute* fitneſs, of and in *themſelves*.

A *gift*, a *blow*, the making a *wound*, or *ſhedding* of *blood*, conſidered in themſelves, have no *abſolute* fitneſs, but are fit or unfit according to a variety of accidental circumſtances.

When therefore God by his will makes any thing fit to be done, he does not make the thing fit in *itſelf*, which is juſt in the *ſame ſtate* conſidered in *itſelf*, that it was before, but it becomes fit for the perſon to do it, becauſe he can only be happy, or do that which is fit for him to do, by doing the will of God.

For inſtance, the *bare eating* a fruit, conſidered in *itſelf*, is neither fit nor unfit. If a fruit is appointed by God for our food, then it is as fit to eat it, as to preſerve our lives. If a fruit is poiſonous, then it is as unfit to eat it, as to commit ſelf-murder. If eating of a fruit is prohibited by God, then it is as unfit as to eat our own damnation.

But in none of theſe inſtances is the eating or not eating, conſidered in *itſelf fit* or *unfit*: but has all its fitneſs, or unfitneſs, from ſuch circumſtances, as are entirely owing to the will of God.

Suppoſing therefore God to require a perſon to do ſomething, which according to his preſent circumſtances, *without* that command, he ought not to do, God does not make that which is *abſolutely* unfit in *itſelf*, fit to be done: but only adds *new circumſtances* to an action, that is neither fit, nor unfit, moral, nor immoral in *itſelf*, but becauſe of its circumſtances.

Again, it is objected, *If there is nothing right or wrong, good or bad, antecedently and independently of the will of God, there can then be no reaſon, why God ſhould will, or command one thing, rather than another.*

It is anſwered, *firſt*, That all goodneſs, and all poſſible perfection, is as *eternal* as God, and as eſſential to him as his exiſtence. And to ſay, that they are either *anteccdent* or *conſequent*, *dependent* or *independent* of his will, would be equally abſurd. To aſk therefore, whether there is not

not ſomething right and wrong, antecedent to the will of God, is as abſurd, as to aſk for ſome antecedent cauſe of his exiſtence. And to aſk, how God can be good if there is not ſomething good independently of him, is aſking how he can be infinite, if there be not ſomething infinite independently of him. And to ſeek for any other *ſource* or *reaſon* of the divine goodneſs, beſides the divine nature, is like ſeeking for ſome external cauſe and help of the divine omnipotence.

The goodneſs and wiſdom, therefore, by which God is wiſe and good, and to which all his works of wiſdom and goodneſs are owing, are neither *antecedent*, nor *conſequent* to his will.

Secondly, Nothing is more certain, than that all *moral obligations* and *duties* of creatures towards one another, *began* with the exiſtence of moral creatures. This is as certain, as that all corporeal qualities and effects, *began* with the exiſtence of bodies.

As therefore nothing has the nature of a cauſe or effect, nothing has any quality of any kind in bodies, but what is entirely owing to matter ſo created and conſtituted by the *will* of God; ſo no actions have any *moral qualities*, but what are wholly owing to that ſtate and nature in which they are created by the will of God.

* Moral obligations therefore of creatures have the ſame *origin*, and the *ſame reaſon*, that natural qualities and effects have in the corporeal world, *viz.* the ſole will of God. And as in a

different ſtate of matter, bodies would have had different qualities and effects; ſo in a different ſtate of rational beings, there would be different moral obligations, and nothing could be right or good in their behaviour, but what began then to be right and good, becauſe they then began to exiſt in ſuch a ſtate and condition of life. And as their ſtate and condition could have no other cauſe or reaſon of its exiſtence, but the ſole will of God, ſo the cauſe and reaſon of right and wrong in ſuch a ſtate, muſt be equally owing to the will of God.

The pretended *abſolute independent fitneſſes*, or *unfitneſſes* of actions therefore *in themſelves*, are vain *abſtractions*, and philoſophical *jargon*, ſerving no ends of morality, but only helping people to wrangle and diſpute away that ſincere obedience to God, which is their only happineſs. But to make theſe imaginary *abſolute fitneſſes* the *common law* both of God and man, is ſtill more extravagant. For if the *circumſtances* of actions give them their *moral nature*, ſurely God muſt firſt be in our circmſtances, before that which is a law to us, can be the ſame law to him.

And if a father may require that of a ſon, which his ſon, becauſe of his *different ſtate*, cannot require of his brother; ſurely that which God may require of us, may be as different from that which a father may require of a ſon, as God is different from a father.

Again, if God is as much under a law as we are, then he is as much under authority; for

for law can no more be without authority, than without a law-giver. And if God and we are under the *ſame law*, we muſt be under the *ſame authority*.

* But as God cannot be under any law in common with us his creatures, any more than he can be of the ſame rank or order with any us; ſo neither can he be under any law at all, any more than he can be under any authority at all.

And though God is not to be looked upon as an *arbitrary being*, in the ſenſe of this author, who will not diſtinguiſh arbitrary from *humour* and *caprice*; yet in a true ſenſe of the word, when applied to God, he muſt be affirmed to be an arbitrary being, that acts only from himſelf, from his *own will*, and according to his *own pleaſure*.

And we have no more reaſon to be afraid to be left to a God without a law, or to be left to his will and pleaſure, than to be left under the protection and care of a being, that is all love, and mercy, and goodneſs. For as the exiſtence of God, as ſuch, neceſſarily implies the exiſtence of all perfection; ſo the will of God, as ſuch, neceſſarily implies the *willing* every thing, that *all perfection* can will.

And as the exiſtence of God, becauſe it contains all perfection, cannot for that reaſon have any external cauſe; ſo the will of God, becauſe it is *all perfection*, cannot, for that reaſon, have any external *rule* or *direction*. But his own will is wiſdom, and his wiſdom is his will. His

goodneſs is arbitrary, and his arbitrarineſs is goodneſs.

But this writer does not only thus bring God into this ſtate of law and obligation with us, but makes farther advances in the ſame kind of errors.

Hence, ſays he, *we may contemplate the great dignity of our rational nature, ſince our reaſon for* kind, *tho' not for degree, is of the* ſame nature *with* that of *God's*.†

Here you ſee *our reaſon*, that is, our *faculty* of reaſoning, (for reaſon cannot be called *ours* in any other reſpect,) has no other difference from reaſon as it is in God, but that of degree. But what greater abſurdity can a man fall into, than to ſuppoſe, that a being whoſe exiſtence had a beginning but a few years ago, differs only in a degree from that which could not poſſibly have a beginning; or that a *dependent* and *independent* being, ſhould not be different in *kind*, but *only* in degree?

For to ſay, that the faculties of a dependent and independent being, may be of the ſame kind, is as flat a contradiction, as to ſay, the ſame kind of thing may be dependent, and independent.

Reaſon belongs to God and man, juſt as *power*, *exiſtence*, *life*, and *happineſs*, belong to God and man; and he that can, from happineſs being common to God and man, prove our happineſs

to

† Page 24.

to be of the *ſame kind* and nature with God's, may alſo prove reaſon in God and man to be of the ſame kind.

This writer indeed ſays, *Our happineſs is limited*, becauſe *our reaſon is ſo*; and that God has *unlimited happineſs*, becauſe *he alone has unlimited reaſon*.†

But if that which is *neceſſarily limited*, is different from that which is *neceſſarily unlimited*, then we have proof enough from this very argument, that a reaſon *neceſſarily* limited cannot be of the *ſame kind* with that reaſon, which is *neceſſarily* unlimited. Unleſs it can be ſaid, that limited and unlimited, finite and infinite, beginning and unbeginning, have no contrariety in *kind*, but only differ, as a *ſhort* line differs from a *long* one.

* The truth of the matter is this; reaſon is, in God and man, as power is in God and man. And as the divine power has ſome degree of likeneſs to human power, yet with an *infinite* difference from it: ſo that perfection which we call *reaſon* in God, has ſome degree of likeneſs to reaſon as it is in man, yet is *infinitely* and beyond all conception different from it.

* And as our enjoyment of power is ſo limited, ſo imperfect, ſo ſuperficial, as to be ſcarce ſufficient to tell us, what power is, much leſs what omnipotence is; ſo our ſhare of reaſon is ſo ſmall, and we enjoy it in ſo imperfect a manner,

† Page 24.

ner, that we can ſcarce think or talk intelligibly of it, or ſo much as define our own faculties of reaſoning.

CHAP. II.

Shewing from the relation *between God and man, that human reaſon cannot be a competent judge of the* fitneſs *and* reaſonableneſs *of God's proceedings with mankind, either as to the* time, *or* matter, *or* manner *of an external revelation.*

AS our author has laid it down for an undeniable rule of God's actions, that he muſt, if he be a wiſe and good being, act according to the relation he ſtands in towards his creatures; I proceed upon this principle to prove the incapacity of *human reaſon*, to judge *truly* of God's proceedings in regard to divine revelation.

For if the fitneſs of actions *reſults from the nature and relations* of beings, then the *fitneſs* of God's actions, as he is an *omniſcient Creator* and *Governor*, to whom every thing is *eternally foreknown*, over beings endued with *our freedom of will*, muſt be to us incomprehenſible.

* We are not ſo much as capable of comprehending by our reaſon, the *poſſibility* of this relation, or how the fore-knowledge of God can conſiſt with the free agency of creatures. We know

know that God fore-knows all things, with the ſame certainty as we know there is a God. And if *ſelf-conſciouſneſs* is an infallible proof of our own exiſtence, it proves with the ſame certainty the freedom of our will. And hence it is, that we have a full aſſurance of the conſiſtency of God's fore-knowledge with freedom of will.

* Now this *incomprehenſible* relation between an *eternally fore-knowing Creator and Governor*, and his free creatures, is the *relation* from whence ariſes the fitneſs of God's providence over us. But if the *relation* itſelf is incomprehenſible, then thoſe actions that have their fitneſs from it, muſt furely be incomprehenſible. Nothing can be fit for God to do, either in *creation* or *providence*, but what has its fitneſs founded in his *fore-knowledge* of every thing that would follow, from *every kind* of creation, and *every manner* of providence: but if nothing can be fit, but becauſe it is according to *this fore-knowledge* of *every thing* that would follow from *every kind* of creation, and *every manner* of providence; then we have the utmoſt certainty, that the fitneſs of God's actions as a *fore-knowing Creator*, and *Governor* of free agents, muſt be founded upon *reaſons* that we cannot poſſibly know any thing of.

* And a child that has but juſt learned to ſpeak, is as well qualified to ſtate the fitneſs of the laws of matter and motion by which the

whole vegetable world is preserved, as the wisest of men is qualified to comprehend, or state the fitness of the methods, which a *fore-knowing Providence* observes over free agents. For every reason on which the fitness of such a providence is founded, is not only *unknown* to us, but by a necessity of nature *impossible* to be known by us.

For if the *fitness* of God's acting in this, or that manner, is founded in his fore-knowledge of every thing that would *happen*, from every *possible way* of acting, then it is impossible for us to know the reasons, on which the fitness of his actions is founded, as it is impossible for us to be omniscient.

Who can tell what *different kinds* of rational creatures, distinguished by variety of natures, and faculties, it is fit and reasonable for God to create, because he eternally foresaw what would be the *effect* of such different creations? Who can explain the *fitness* of that vast *variety* there is amongst rational creatures of the *same species*, or shew that all their different faculties ought to be as they are? And yet the *fitness* of this providence has its *certain reason* in the divine fore-knowledge, and it could not be fit, but because of it.

Who can tell what *degree* of reason rational creatures ought to enjoy, or what degrees of *new* and *revealed* knowledge it is fit and reasonable for God to give, or not give them, because

cauſe they ſeem, or ſeem not to themſelves to want it, are diſpoſed, or not diſpoſed to receive it? For as mankind cannot tell why it was fit and reaſonable for God to create them of ſuch a *kind*, and *degree*, as they are of; ſo neither can they tell how God ought, or ought not to add to their natural knowledge, and make them as *differently accountable* for the uſe of revealed rules of life, as for the uſe of their natural faculties.

And as the reaſon why God created them of *ſuch* a *kind*, and with *ſuch faculties*, was becauſe of his own fore-knowledge of the *effects* of ſuch a creation; ſo if ever he does reveal to them any *ſupernatural* knowledge, both the doing it, the *time*, the *matter*, and *manner* of it, muſt have their fitneſs in his own *eternal fore-knowledge* of the effects of ſuch a revelation.

The reaſons therefore on which the fitneſs of this or that revelation depends, *why* or *when*, of *what matter*, in *what manner*, and to whom it is to be made, muſt, from the nature and reaſon of things, be as unſearchable by us, as the reaſons of *this* or *that* creation of rational beings, at ſuch a *time*, of ſuch a *kind*, in ſuch a *manner*, in ſuch a *ſtate*.

This may help us to an eaſy ſolution of the unreaſonable queſtions, which this writer puts in this manner.

" If

" If the deſign of God in communicating any thing of himſelf to men was their happineſs, would not that deſign have obliged him, who at all times alike deſires their happineſs, to have at all times alike communicated it to them? If God always acts for the good of his creatures, what reaſon can be aſſigned, why he ſhould not from the beginning have diſcovered ſuch things as make for their good, but defer the doing it till the time of *Tiberius*; ſince the ſooner this was done, the greater would his goodneſs appear?" †

And again " How is it conſiſtent with the notion of God's being univerſally benevolent, not to have revealed it to all his children, when all had equal need of it? Was it not as eaſy for him to have communicated it to all nations, as to any one nation or perſon? Or in all languages, as in one?" ‡

Now all this is fully anſwered, by our author's own great and fundamental principle.

" For if the relations between things and perſons, and the things reſulting from thence, be the ſole rule of God's actions," § as he expreſsly affirms; then the *ſole rule* or reaſon of God's revealing any thing to any men, at any time, muſt have its *fitneſs reſulting* from the divine fore-knowledge of the effects of *ſuch* a revelation, at *ſuch* a time, and to *ſuch* perſons. If God

† Page 393. ‡ Page 196. § Page 28.

God does not act thus, he does not act according to the relation betwixt a *fore-knowing Creator*, and his free creatures. But if he does act according to a *fitneſs reſulting* from this *relation*, and makes, or does not make revelations, according to his own fore-knowledge of the fitneſs of times and perſons for them; then to aſk how a God, always equally good, can make a revelation at any time, and not make the *ſame* at *all* times, is as abſurd as to aſk, how a God, always equally good, can reveal that at one time, becauſe it is a *proper* time for it, and not reveal it at every other time, tho' improper for it.

* God's goodneſs, directed by his own fore-knowledge of the *fitneſs* of times, and of the *ſtate* and *actions* of free agents, deferred a certain revelation to the time of *Tiberius*, becauſe he *foreſaw* it would then be an act of the *greateſt* goodneſs, and have its *beſt effects* upon the world: to aſk therefore, *what reaſon can be aſſigned*, why ſo good a revelation was not *ſooner*, or even from the *beginning* made to the world, is aſking, why God ſhould act, according to his *own fore-knowledge* of the *ſtate* and *actions* of *free agents*, and order all things, according to a fitneſs reſulting from ſuch a fore-knowledge?

Theſe queſtions ſuppoſe, that if God ſhewed his *goodneſs* to mankind by a revelation at ſuch time, he muſt be *wanting* in goodneſs before that time, becauſe he did not make it *ſooner*; whereas

whereas if his deferring it till *ſuch* a time, was owing to his *fore-knowledge* of the actions and ſtate of free agents, and becauſe it would then have its *beſt effects*, then God is proved to be equally good before he made it, for this very reaſon, becauſe he did not make it before its *proper* time: and he had been wanting in goodneſs, if he had not *deferred* it till that time.

Now this appealing to God's fore-knowledge of the ſtate and actions of *free agents*, as the cauſe of all that is particular in the *time* and *manner* of any revelation, and deducing its fitneſs from thence, cannot be ſaid to be *begging the queſtion*, but is reſolving it directly according to the *rule*, which this writer lays down for God to act by: that "the relations between things and perſons, *and* the fitneſs reſulting from thence, muſt be the ſole rule of God's actions."

But if this is the *ſole rule*, then God in giving any revelation, muſt act as the *relation* betwixt a *fore-knowing* Creator and his *free* creatures requires; and his actions muſt have their *fitneſs reſulting* from his fore-knowledge of the *ſtate* and *actions* of free agents. And if this is God's ſole rule, then to aſk why *this* or *that* revelation *only* at *ſuch* a time, is to aſk why God *only* does that which is *fit* for him to do? And to aſk, why not the ſame revelation at any other time, is aſking why God does not do that, which it is *not fit* for him to do?

This writer aſks, "How it is conſiſtent with the

the notion of God's being univerſally benevolent, not to have revealed it to all his children, who had equal need of it?" But if they had *equal need* of it, yet if they were not *equally fit* for it, but prepared only to have their *guilt* increaſed by it, and ſo be expoſed to a greater damnation; then God's goodneſs to them is manifeſt, by withholding ſuch information from them, and reſerving it for thoſe that would be made happier by it.

Judas, *Pontius Pilate*, and the *Jews* that called for our Saviour's crucifixion, had *equal need* of a Saviour with thoſe that believed in him. *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida* wanted the light of the goſpel as much as thoſe that received it. And if the reſt of the world had been, at that time, as much indiſpoſed for the light of the goſpel, as they were, God's goodneſs had been greater to that age, if he had reſerved the light of the goſpel till a better age had ſucceeded.

So that this argument, founded on the *equal need* of all, or former ages, has no force, unleſs it could be ſhewn, that the ſame revelation made to any of theſe former ages, would have produced all thoſe good effects, which God foreſaw would follow, from its being reſerved for ſuch a *particular time* and *ſtate* of things and perſons.

He aſks again, "Was it not as eaſy for God to have communicated it to all nations, as to any one nation or perſon? Or in all languages, as

in

in any one?" This argument is built upon this ſuppoſition, that God does things becauſe they are *eaſy*, or forbears things becauſe they are *difficult* to be performed. For it can be no argument, that God ought to have revealed ſuch things to *all* nations or perſons, becauſe it was as *eaſy* to him, as to do it to *any one* nation or perſon; unleſs it be ſuppoſed, that the *eaſineſs* of a thing is a reaſon why God does it, and the difficulty of a thing a reaſon why he does not do it. But if this ſuppoſition be very abſurd, then the argument founded upon it muſt be liable to the ſame charge.

But if God does things, not becauſe they are eaſy, but becauſe they are infinitely good and fit to be done, then the reaſon why God has afforded different revelations, to different ages and perſons, is this, that his *manner* of revealing every thing, might be worthy of his own *foreknowledge* of the effects of it, and that every thing that is particular in the *time* or *manner* of any revelation, might have its *fitneſs reſulting* from the *relation* betwixt a good God and his creatures, whoſe *changing* ſtate, *different* conduct, tempers and actions, are all eternally fore-known by him.

Again, it is objected, that a divine revelation muſt either be the effect of *juſtice*, or elſe of *mercy* and *free goodneſs*; but in either of theſe caſes it ought to be *univerſal*; for juſtice muſt be done to all. But if it is the effect of *mercy* and *free goodneſs*,

neſs, this writer aſks, " How a being can be denominated merciful and good, who is ſo only to a few, but cruel and unmerciful to the reſt? †

It is anſwered, That there is neither *juſtice* in God without mercy, nor *mercy* without juſtice; and to aſcribe a *revelation* to either of them ſeparately, in *contradiſtinction* to the other, has no more reaſon in it, than to aſcribe the *creation* ſeparately either to the *wiſdom* or *power* of God, in contradiſtinction to the other.

Secondly, A divine revelation is not owing barely to the *juſtice* or *free goodneſs* of God, but to the goodneſs, mercy, and juſtice of God, *governed* and *directed* by his eternal fore-knowledge of all the effects of every revelation, at any, or all times.

* God ordains a revelation in this, or that manner, time, and place; not becauſe it is a *juſtice* that he cannot refuſe, not becauſe it is a matter of *favour* or *free goodneſs*, and therefore may be given in any manner at pleaſure; but becauſe he has the whole *duration* of human things, the whole *race* of mankind, the whole *order* of human changes and events, the whole *combination* of all cauſes and effects of human tempers, all the actions of free agents, and all the conſequences of every revelation, plainly in his ſight; and according to this eternal fore-knowledge, every revelation receives every thing that is *particular* in it, either as to *time*, *matter*, *manner*, or *place*.

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† Page 401.

* All complaints therefore about that which is *particular*, or *ſeemingly* partial in the time and manner of any revelation, are very unjuſtifiable; and ſhew, that we are diſcontent at God's proceedings, becauſe he acts like himſelf, does what is beſt and fitteſt to be done, and governs the world, not according to our weak imaginations, but according to his own infinite perfections.

* We will not allow a providence to be *right*, unleſs we can comprehend the reaſonableneſs of all its ſteps; and yet it could not poſſibly be right, unleſs its proceedings were as much *above* our comprehenſion, as our wiſdom is *below* that which is infinite.

For if the *relations* of *things*, and *perſons*, and the fitneſs reſulting from thence, be the *rule* of God's actions; then all the revelations that come from God, muſt have their fitneſs reſulting from the relation his fore-knowledge bears to the *various ſtates*, *conditions*, *tempers*, and *actions* of free agents, and the various effects of every manner of revelation.

But if God cannot act worthy of himſelf in any revelation, unleſs he acts according to a fitneſs reſulting from this relation; then he muſt act by a *rule* that lies out of our ſight, and his providence in this particular muſt be incomprehenſible to us; for this very reaſon, becauſe it has that very fitneſs, wiſdom and goodneſs in it, that it ought to have.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Shewing how far human reaſon is able to judge of the reaſonableneſs, truth, and certainty of divine revelation.

THE former chapter has plainly ſhewn, from the ſtate and relation between God and man, that we muſt be ſtrangers to the true reaſons on which a divine revelation is founded, both as to its *time*, *matter*, and *manner*.

But it is here objected, "If God by reaſon of his own perfections muſt be thus myſterious and incomprehenſible, both in the matter and manner of divine revelation; how can we know what revelations we are to receive as divine? How can we be blamed for rejecting this, or receiving that, if we cannot comprehend the reaſons on which every revelation is founded, both as to its matter and manner?"

If a man may be blameable, or commendable, for his right or wrong belief of a God; then a man may be accountable for a right or wrong belief of ſuch matters, as are in their own nature too myſterious for his comprehenſion. And tho' a man knows the reaſons of a divine revelation, either as to its *matter* or *manner*, as imperfectly as he knows the divine nature; yet he may be as liable to account for believing *falſe revelations*, as for *idolatry*; and as full of guilt for

for rejecting a *true revelation*, as for denying the only *true God*.

Secondly, Tho' we are insufficient for comprehending the *reasons*, on which the particular *matter* or *manner* of any divine revelation is founded; yet we may be so far sufficient judges, of the reasons for *receiving* or not *receiving* a revelation as divine, as to make our conduct therein justly accountable to God.

For if God can shew a revelation to proceed from him, by the *same undeniable* evidence, as he shews the *creation* to be his work; if he can make himself as visible in a *particular extraordinary* manner, as he is by his *general* and *ordinary* providence; then, tho' we are as unqualified to judge of the mysteries of a *revelation*, as we are to judge of the mysteries in *creation* and *providence*; yet we may be as fully obliged to receive a revelation, as to acknowledge the creation to be the work of God; and as highly criminal for disbelieving it, as for denying a general providence.

Adam, *Noah*, *Abraham*, and *Moses*, were very incompetent judges, of the reasons on which the particular revelations made to them were founded; but this did not hinder their sufficient assurance, that such revelations came from God, because they were proved to come from God in the same manner, as the creation is proved to be the work of God.

And as *Adam* and *Noah* must see every thing wonderful, mysterious, and above their comprehensions,

prehenſions, in thoſe new worlds into which they were introduced by God; ſo they could no more expect, that he ſhould require nothing of them, but what they would enjoin themſelves, than that their own *frame*, the *nature* of the creation, the *providence* of God, or the *ſtate* of human life, ſhould be exactly as they would have it.

And if their poſterity will let no *meſſages* from heaven, no *propheſies* and *miracles* perſuade them, that God can call them to any duties, but ſuch as they muſt enjoin themſelves; or to the belief of any doctrines, but ſuch as their own minds can ſuggeſt; nor to any methods of changing their preſent ſtate of weakneſs and diſorder for a happy immortality, but ſuch as ſuit their own *taſte*, *temper*, and way of reaſoning; it is becauſe they are grown ſenſeleſs of the myſteries of creation and providence with which they are ſurrounded, and forget the awful prerogative of infinite wiſdom, over the weakeſt, loweſt rank of intelligent beings.

* And as we can only know what is worthy of God in creation, by knowing what he has created; ſo we can no other way know what is worthy of God to be revealed, but by a revelation. And he that pretends independently of any relation, to ſhew *how*, and in what manner God ought to make a revelation worthy of himſelf, is as great a *viſionary*, as he that ſhould pretend independently of the creation, or without learning

ing any thing from it, to ſhew how God ought to have proceeded in it, to make it worthy of himſelf. For as God alone, knows how to create worthy of himſelf, and nothing can poſſibly be proved to be worthy to be created by him, but becauſe he has already created it; ſo God alone knows what is worthy of himſelf in a revelation, and nothing can poſſibly be proved worthy to be revealed by him, but becauſe he has already revealed it.

Hence we may ſee how little this *writer* is governed by the *reaſon* and *nature* of things, who proceeds upon this as an undeniable principle, that we could not know a revelation to be divine, unleſs we knew, antecedently to revelation, what God could teach or require of us by it. Thus, ſays he, "Were we not capable by our own reaſon of knowing what the divine goodneſs could command, or forbid his creatures, antecedently to any external revelation, we could not diſtinguiſh the true inſtituted religion, from the *many* falſe ones."†

Juſt as wild and viſionary, as if it was ſaid, Were we not capable by our reaſon of knowing what kind or orders of beings God *ought* to create *independently* of any thing we learn from the creation, we could never prove this or that creation to proceed from him. Did we not, antecedently to facts and experience, know by our own reaſon what ought to be the method and manner

† Page 66.

ner of divine providence, we could never prove that the providence which governs nations and perſons is a divine providence.

Again, He proceeds to ſhew, that a revelation from God cannot contain any thing, but what human reaſon can prove from the nature of things; becauſe if God could require any thing more of us, than what our own reaſon could thus prove, he muſt require *without* reaſon, and then there is an end of all religion.

Now this argument proceeds thus; If God does not act according to the *meaſure* of *human* reaſon, he cannot act according to *reaſon itſelf*. If he requires any more of us, than what we *think* the nature of things requires of us, then he cannot act according to the nature of things. If his wiſdom is in any matters of revelation *greater* than ours; if it is not in every thing he reveals *meaſurable* by ours, it cannot be wiſdom at all, much leſs can it be infinite wiſdom.

That is, if he is *more powerful* than we are, he cannot be *omnipotent*; if he is *more perfect* than we are, he cannot be *all perfection*; if he acts upon *greater*, or *higher*, or *more* reaſonable motives than we do, he cannot be a *reaſonable* being.

Now if theſe abſurdities are not plain and manifeſt to every common underſtanding, it is in vain to diſpute about any thing; but if they are, then it is as plain, this writer's great argument againſt Chriſtianity, and firſt principle of his *rational re-*

ligion, is in the same state of undeniable absurdity.

Thus says he, "Natural religion takes in all those duties which flow from the reason and the nature of things."† That is, natural religion takes in all those things that bare human reason can discover from the nature of things. This is granted; but what follows? Why, says he, "Consequently, was there an instituted religion which differs from that of nature, its precepts must be arbitrary, as not founded on the nature and reason of things, but depending on mere will and pleasure, otherwise it would be the same with natural religion."‡

Here you see all the absurdities just mentioned, are expressly contained in this argument, God is all *humour* and *caprice*, if his revelation is not strictly, in every respect, the same with human reason. That is, he is *without* wisdom, *without* reason, if his wisdom and reason exceed ours. He has *no reason*, nor *wisdom*, if his reason and wisdom are *infinite*.

Secondly, This argument, if it were allowed, leads directly to *atheism*. For if a revelation cannot be divine, if it contains any thing mysterious, whose fitness and necessity cannot be explained by human reason, then neither *creation* nor *providence* can be proved to be divine, for they are both of them more mysterious than the Christian revelation.

And

† Page 114. ‡ Page 16.

And if every thing is *arbitrary*, whose *fitness and experience* human reason cannot *prove* and *explain*, then surely an *invisible over-ruling providence* that orders all things in a manner, and for reasons, known only to itself; that subjects human life, and human affairs, to what changes it pleases; that confounds the best-laid designs, and makes great effects arise from folly and imprudence; that gives not the race to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; that brings good men into affliction, and makes the wicked prosperous; surely such a providence must be highly arbitrary.

And therefore if this argument is to be admitted, it leads directly to *atheism*, and brings us under a greater necessity of rejecting divine providence, on the account of its mysteries, than of rejecting a revelation that is mysterious in any of its doctrines. And if, God cannot be said to deal with us as rational agents, if he requires any thing of us, that our reason cannot prove to be necessary; surely he cannot be said to deal with us as rational agents, if he over-rules our persons and affairs, and disappoints our counsels, makes weakness prosperous, and wisdom unsuccessful, in a *secret* and *invisible* manner, and for reasons and ends that we have no means of knowing.

* There is nothing therefore half so mysterious in the Christian revelation, as there is in that *invisible* providence, which all must hold that be-

lieve a God. And tho' there is enough plain in providence, to excite the adoration of humble and pious minds, yet it has often been a rock of *atheiſm* to thoſe, who make their own reaſon the meaſure of wiſdom.

Again, Tho' the *creation* plainly declares the glory, and wiſdom, and goodneſs of God; yet it has more myſteries in it, more things whoſe fitneſs, expedience, and reaſonableneſs, human reaſon cannot comprehend, than are to be found in ſcripture.

If therefore he reaſons right, who ſays, "If there may be ſome things in a true religion, whoſe fitneſs and expedience we cannot ſee, why not others: nay, why not the whole; ſince that would make God's laws all of a piece? And if the having of theſe things is no proof of its falſhood, how can any things fit and expedient (which no religion is without) be a proof of the truth of any one religion?"† *If, I ſay, this is the right reaſoning, then it may be ſaid,* "If there are things in the creation whoſe fitneſs we cannot ſee, why not others: nay, why not the whole; ſince that would make God's works of a piece? And if the being of ſuch things as theſe in the creation, is not a proof of its not being divine, how can the fitneſs and expedience of any creation prove that it is the work of God?

Thus does this argument tend wholly to *atheiſm*, and concludes with the ſame force againſt

† Firſt addreſs to the inhabitants of London, Page 57.

againſt *creation* and *providence*, as it does againſt revelation.

Either therefore there is nothing in the work of the creation, whoſe fitneſs and expedience cannot be proved; nothing in God's providence over whole nations, and particular perſons, whoſe fitneſs and expedience cannot be explained and juſtified by human reaſon, or elſe neither creation nor providence can be aſcribed to God.

The credibility of an external divine revelation with regard to human reaſon, reſts wholly upon *ſuch external* evidence, as is a ſufficient proof of the divine interpoſition. If there be no ſuch external evidence poſſible; if God has no ways of acting ſo *peculiar* to himſelf, as to be a *ſufficient* proof to human reaſon of his action; then no revelation can be ſufficiently proved to be a divine, external revelation from God.

I appeal therefore to the miracles and prophecies on which Chriſtianity is founded, as a ſufficient proof, that it is a divine revelation. And ſhall here conſider, what is objected againſt the ſufficiency of this kind of proof.

1. It is objected, That miracles cannot prove a *falſe*, or *bad* doctrine, to be *true* and *good*; therefore miracles, *as ſuch*, cannot prove the truth of any revelation.

But though miracles cannot prove falſe to be true, or bad to be good; yet they may prove, that we ought to receive ſuch doctrines, both as true and good, which we could not know to be true and good without ſuch miracles. Not becauſe the miracles have any influence upon the things revealed, but becauſe they are God's teſtimony to the truth of that which he reveals.

But our author brings a farther objection againſt this uſe of miracles.

"If, *ſays he*, evil beings can impreſs notions in mens minds as ſtrongly as good beings, and cauſe miracles to be done in confirmation of them; is there any way to know to which of the two, notions thus impreſſed are owing, but from their internal marks of wiſdom and goodneſs?"

This objection ſuppoſes, that no miracles can be a ſufficient proof of the divinity of a revelation; becauſe we do not know the extent of that power, which evil ſpirits have, of doing miracles. But this objection is groundleſs. For, granting that we do not know the extent of that power which evil ſpirits may have; yet if we know *enough* of it to affirm, that the *creation* is not the work of evil ſpirits; if we can ſecurely appeal to the creation, as *a ſufficient proof* of God's action and opperation; then we are ſecure in appealing to miracles, as a ſufficient proof of a divine revelation.

For, if the creation muſt be allowed to be the works

work of God, notwithſtanding any *unknown degree* of power in evil ſpirits; if we can as certainly aſcribe it to God, as if there were no *ſuch* ſpirits; then miracles may be as full a proof of the interpoſition of God, as if there were no ſuch ſpirits in being.

I do not aſk, Whether the *ſame divine* perfection is neceſſary to foretel ſuch things as are foretold in ſcripture, and work ſuch miracles as are there related, as is neceſſary to *create?* I do not aſk, Whether any power leſs than divine can do ſuch things? I only aſk, Whether there is any certainty, that the creation is the work of God? Whether we can be ſure of the divine operation, from the exiſtence of that creation? Or, Whether we are in *doubt* or *uncertainty* about it, becauſe we do not know the *degree* of power, that may belong to evil ſpirits.

For if it can be affirmed, that the creation is the work of God, notwithſtanding our uncertainty about the degree of power that may belong to evil ſpirits; then we have the ſame certainty, that the *prophecies* and *miracles* recorded in ſcripture, are to be aſcribed to God, notwithſtanding our uncertainty of the power of evil ſpirits.

For every reaſon for aſcribing the creation to God, is the ſame reaſon for aſcribing ſuch miracles and prophecies to God; and every argument againſt the certainty of thoſe miracles and prophecies coming from God, is the ſame argument againſt the certainty of the creation's being the

work of God; for there cannot be more or leſs certainty in one caſe than in the other.

For, if evil ſpirits have ſo the creation in their hands, that by reaſon of their power over it, no *miracles* can prove the operation of God, then the operation of God cannot be proved from the creation itſelf.

For the creation cannot be proved to be the operation of God, unleſs it can be proved that God *ſtill preſides* over it.

And if *all that* which is extraordinary and miraculous may be accounted for, without the interpoſition of God; then nothing that is ordinary and common according to the courſe of nature, can be a proof of the action of God. For there can be no reaſon aſſigned, why that which is *ordinary* ſhall be aſcribed to God, if all that is, or has been, or can be miraculous, may be aſcribed to evil ſpirits.

Either therefore it muſt be ſaid, that there are, or may be miracles, which cannot be the effects of evil ſpirits; or elſe nothing that is ordinary and common can be a proof of the operation of God. For if nothing miraculous can be an undeniable proof of God's action, nothing created can be a proof of it.

The matter therefore ſtands thus: There are, and may be miracles, that cannot be aſcribed to evil ſpirits, without aſcribing the creation to them; and which can no more be doubted to come from God, than we can doubt of his being the

the Creator of the world. There may be miracles therefore, which, are as full a proof of the *truth* of that which they atteſt, as the creation is of the *fitneſs* of that which is created.

And though the *matter* of a revelation is to be attended to, that we may fully underſtand it, and be rightly affected with it; yet the reaſon of our receiving it, muſt reſt upon that *external authority*, which ſhews it to be of God.

And the authority of miracles, ſufficiently plain and apparent, are of themſelves a full reaſon for receiving a revelation, which both as to its *matter* and *manner*, would not be approved by us without them.

The hiſtory of magical wonders, and extraordinary things done by evil ſpirits, is no objection againſt the ſufficiency of that proof, that ariſes from miracles. For the queſtion is not, whether nothing that is extraordinary can be done by evil ſpirits, but whether nothing that is miraculous can, be a proof of its being done by God. For theſe two caſes are very conſiſtent. It may be very poſſible for evil ſpirits, to do things extraordinary in *ſome circumſtances*, as were people enter into contracts with them, and reſign themſelves up to their power, and yet that miracle may in *other circumſtances*, be a ſufficient proof of their being done by God.

And as miracles are the higheſt and moſt undeniable evidence of the truth and divinity of any external revelation; ſo Chriſtianity ſtands

fully diſtinguiſhed from all other religions, by the higheſt and moſt undeniable evidences; ſince it has all the proof that the *higheſt ſtate* of miracles can give, and every other religion is without any ſupport from them.

And though this writer, with a boldneſs worthy of himſelf, often puts all *traditional religion* upon a level; yet he might have ſhewn himſelf as much a friend to truth as ſobriety, by aſſerting, that all *arguments* are equally concluſive, all *tempers* equally virtuous, all *deſigns* equally honeſt, and all *hiſtories* and *fables* equally ſupported by evidences of fact.

To give you one inſtance more of this writer's extravagant and inconſiſtent notions.

He makes *reaſon*, or *natural religion*, to be God's *internal revelation*, differing *only* from *external revelation in the manner of its being communicated.* He rejects *external revelation* as unworthy of God, becauſe it has not been ſufficiently made known at *all times*, and in *all places*; yet he ſets up an internal revelation, as worthy of God, which has never been made known to any *one man* of any *time* or *place* in the world. For what one man ever knew that *reaſon* was God's *internal revelation*, to which nothing could be added by any external revelation?

It is a mighty complaint with our author againſt Chriſtianity, that ſo much happineſs ſhould be deferred till the time of *Tiberius*, and that it ſhould be communicated to no greater a part of the world, than Chriſtianity hath been. But

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is not this a *judicious* complaint in the mouth of a perſon, that is ſetting up a religion, that has been communicated to no body but himſelf.

I know nothing that can be ſaid for our author, in excuſe of ſo much confuſion and ſelf-contradiction, unleſs it be the particular hardſhips of his *ſect*. The *free-thinking few*, he ſays, *are forced into an outward compliance*; and that which *forces* a man into a ſtate of hypocriſy, may force him into a great deal of confuſion and ſelf-contradiction.

To return: I have from a conſideration of the ſtate of man, and the ſeveral relations which God ſtands in towards his creatures, ſhewn that it is utterly impoſſible for human reaſon to be a competent judge of the fitneſs, or unfitneſs, of all that God may, or may not require of us. The two following chapters ſhall ſtate the nature and perfection of reaſon, as it is a faculty, or principle of action in human nature.

CHAP. IV.

Of the ſtate and nature of reaſon, as it is in man; and how its perfection in matters of religion is to be known.

THIS writer and others, who take to themſelves the names of *free-thinkers*, make their court to the world, by pretending to vindicate the right that all men have, to judge and act ac-

cording to their own reaſon. Though, I think, the world has no more to thank them for on this account, than if they had pretended to aſſert the right that every man has, to ſee *only* with his *own eyes*, or to hear *only* with his *own ears*.

For their own reaſon always did, does, and ever will, govern rational creatures, in every thing they determine, either in ſpeculation or practice. It is not a matter of *duty* for men to uſe their own reaſon, but of *neceſſity*: and it is as impoſſible to do otherwiſe, as for a being that cannot act but from choice, to act without choice.

Man is under the ſame neceſſity of acting from his own choice, that *matter* is of not acting at all; and a being, whoſe principle of action is reaſon and choice, can no more act without it, or contrary to it, than an extended being can be without extenſion.

All men therefore are equally reaſonable in this reſpect, that they are, and muſt be, by a *neceſſity* of nature, equally directed and governed by their own reaſon and choice.

* The diſpute therefore betwixt Chriſtians and *unbelievers*, concerning reaſon, is not, whether men are to uſe their *own reaſon*, any more than whether they are to ſee with their *own eyes*; but whether every man's reaſon muſt needs guide him, by its *own light*, or muſt ceaſe to guide him, as ſoon as it guides him by a light borrowed from revelation? This is the true ſtate of the queſtion, not whether reaſon is to be followed, but when it is

is *beſt* followed? Not whether it is to be our guide, but how it may be made our *ſafeſt guide?*

* The *free-thinkers*, therefore, rather appeal to the paſſions, than reaſon of the people, when they repreſent the clergy and Chriſtianity as enemies to reaſon, and themſelves as friends and advocates for the uſe of reaſon.

* For Chriſtians oppoſe unbelievers, not becauſe they *reaſon*, but becauſe they reaſon *ill*. They receive revelation, not to ſuppreſs the natural power, but to give new and heavenly light to their reaſon; not to take away their right of judging for themſelves, but to ſecure them from falſe judgments.

Chriſtians therefore do not differ from unbelievers in the *conſtant uſe* of their reaſon, but in the *manner* of uſing it: as *virtuous* men differ from *rakes*, not in their deſire of happineſs, but in their manner of ſeeking it.

It appears from what has been ſaid, that every man's own reaſon is his only principle of action, and that he muſt judge according to it, whether he receives, or rejects revelation.

Now although every man is to judge according to the light of his own reaſon, yet his reaſon has very little light that can be called its own. For, as we derive our nature from our parents, ſo that which we generally call *natural knowledge*, or the light of nature, is a knowledge and light that is made natural to us, by the ſame authority, which

which makes a certain language, certain cuſtoms, and modes of behaviour, natural to us.

Nothing ſeems to be our own, but a bare capacity to be inſtructed, a nature fitted for any impreſſions; as liable to be made a *Hottentot*, by being born among Hottentots, as to be a *Chriſtian*, by being born among Chriſtians.

It is not my intention by this to ſignify, that there is not a good and evil, right and wrong founded in the nature of things: but only to ſhew, that we find out this right and wrong, not by any inward ſtrength, that our natural reaſon of itſelf affords, but by ſuch external means, as people are taught articulate language, or the rules of civil life.

Men do not prefer virtue to vice, from a philoſophical contemplation of the fitneſs of the one, and the unfitneſs of the other; but becauſe it is a judgment as early in their minds, as their knowledge of the words, virtue and vice.

And it can no more be reaſonably affirmed, that our knowledge of God and divine things, our opinions of the excellency of this, or that virtue, and of the immortality of our ſouls, are the effects of our natural light; than it can be reaſonably affirmed, that our living in ſociety, and our articulate language are owing to the light of nature.

For, as all mankind find themſelves in this ſtate before any reaſoning about it; as education, and human authority have taught us language,

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and accuſtomed us to the rules and manners of a ſocial life: ſo education, and the ſame authority, have planted in our minds, certain notions of God and divine things, and formed us to a belief of our ſoul's immortality, and the expectation of another life.

And mankind are no more left to find out a God, or the fitneſs of virtue, by their own reaſon, than they are left by their own reaſon, to find out who are their parents, to find out the fitneſs of ſpeaking an articulate language.

Now if this is the ſtate of reaſon, as it is in man; if this is all the light that we have from our own nature, a bare capacity of receiving good or bad impreſſions, right or wrong opinions and ſentiments, according to the ſtate of the world we fall into; then we are but poorly furniſhed, to aſſert the *abſolute perfection* of our own reaſon.

If our light is little more than the opinions and cuſtoms of thoſe amongſt whom we live, and it be ſo hard for a man to arrive at a greater wiſdom, than the common wiſdom of the *country* which gave him birth and education; how unreaſonably do we appeal to the perfection of our reaſon, againſt the *neceſſity* and *advantage* of divine revelation?

* If we are nothing without the aſſiſtance of men; if we are a kind of fooliſh, helpleſs animals, 'till education and experience have revealed to us the wiſdom and knowledge of our fellow-creatures; ſhall we think ourſelves too wiſe and full

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of our own light, to be farther enlightened with a wiſdom revealed to us by God himſelf?

This gentleman, ſpeaking of education, ſaith, "Education is juſtly eſteemed a ſecond nature; and its force is ſo ſtrong, that few can wholly ſhake off its prejudices, even in things unreaſonable and unnatural."

All that I ſhall add to this account, is, that we are by the condition of human life, neceſſarily ſubjected to this *ſecond nature*, and cannot avoid coming under its power.

And here let me aſk this pleader for the ſufficiency of the light of nature, how thoſe that reſign themſelves up to the light of their *own nature*, ſhall know, whether it is their *firſt*, or their *ſecond* nature that directs them?

Here are, it ſeems, *two natures*; they may be as different as good and evil; yet as they are both *natures*, both *internal light*, how ſhall a man know which he follows? He does not know which was firſt, or why he ſhould call one firſt, and the other ſecond; they are both internal, and without any thing to diſtinguiſh them. And as he is not to reſiſt the motions of nature, or ſtifle its directions; ſo he muſt be as obedient to the directions of the ſecond, as of the firſt nature, becauſe he does not perceive their difference, nor has any means to diſtinguiſh their operations.

He therefore that aſſerts the light of nature to be a ſufficient unerring guide in divine matters,

ters, ought either to ſhew, that our *ſecond* nature is as *ſafe* a guide as the firſt; or that though it is nature, yet it has no *natural powers* over us.

For ſince every man is *neceſſitated* to take upon him a ſecond nature, which he does not *know* to be a ſecond, or *when* it began, or *how far* it has proceeded, or how *contrary* it is to his firſt nature; he that would prove the light of nature to be ſo perfect, that nothing can be added to it, is obliged to prove, that our ſecond nature, which we receive by education, has the ſame degree of perfection. For ſo far as our ſecond nature is different from the firſt, ſo far it has changed the firſt; and if we are to follow nature excluſive of revelation, we may take *revenge*, *ſelf-murder*, *incontinence*, *ſenſuality*, *pride*, *ſelf-conceit*, and a *contempt* of all things ſacred, to be the true dictates of nature.

For it often happens to people, to be thus educated; ſo if education is a ſecond nature, and nature is to be eſteemed a *true* and *perfect* guide; a man thus educated, has all his vices made ſo many glorious laws of nature; and thro' the ſtrength of his natural light, he condemns humility, ſelf-denial, and devotion, as fooliſh bigotry.

This writer ſays, "Natural religion, *that is*, *the religion of nature*, is a perpetual ſtanding rule for men of the meaneſt, as well as the high-

eſt

eſt capacities, and carries its own evidence with it, thoſe internal, inſeparable marks of truth.† *But if education is a* ſecond nature, *and, as this writer affirms,* has the force of a ſecond nature even in things unreaſonable and unnatural; *then this ſecond nature has not only its natural religion, which is alſo* a perpetual ſtanding rule for men of the meaneſt, as well as the higheſt capacities; which carries its own evidence with it, thoſe internal, inſeparable marks of truth; *but it may alſo have a natural religion, both* unreaſonable and unnatural; *ſince education has the force of nature even in things of this kind.*"

Again: If education has this force of nature even in things unreaſonable and unnatural; if it is alſo abſolutely neceſſary for all men to come under the power of ſome ſecond nature; what can be more vain, than to pretend to ſtate the light, or rectitude of human nature, ſince it muſt be for the moſt part in every man, as the uncertainty, variety, happineſs or unhappineſs of education has rendered it?

And our author can no more tell, what man would be without education, or what nature would do for thoſe who had no foreign inſtruction, than he can tell what ſort of beings dwell in the moon. And yet he that does not know this, how can he know what the light of nature is in itſelf?

* Again

† Page 243.

* Again to declare the light of nature ſo perfect, as to be incapable of all improvement even by divine revelation, is no leſs an extravagance, than to declare the education of mankind to be perfect in the ſame degree.

* For if nature not only wants, but cannot poſſibly avoid education; if this neceſſary unavoidable education becomes another nature, undiſcernible from the firſt; then nothing can poſſibly be affirmed of the perfection of the light of nature, but what muſt be affirmed in the ſame degree of the perfection of education. And he that affirms that mankind have had, at all times, and in all places of the world, the ſame ſufficient, perfect light of nature, muſt affirm, that mankind have had, at all times, and in all places of the world, the ſame perfect, unerring education.

* When therefore it is juſt, for all people to abide by the abſolute perfection of their education, the infallible light of their ſecond nature, as the unerring ſtandard, of all that is moral, religious, and divine; then it may be juſt to appeal to the natural light of all men, of all ages, and all places, as a ſufficient teacher of all that ought, or ought not to be a matter of religion.

* For till it can be ſhewn, that men are not liable to a ſecond nature from education; the ſtate of nature muſt differ all over the world, and in every age of the world, juſt as the light,

and

and advantages of education, have differed in the ſeveral parts, and ages of the world.

* In a word, the religious and moral light of our firſt nature, is juſt as great as the firſt ſtrength of infants; and the religious and moral light of our ſecond nature, is juſt as perfect as our education, and as much of our own growth, as the firſt language that we are taught to ſpeak.

May not therefore one juſtly wonder, what it is that could lead any people into an imagination of the abſolute perfection of human reaſon? There ſeems no more in the ſtate of mankind, to betray a man into this fancy, than to perſuade him, that the reaſon of infants is abſolutely perfect. For ſenſe and experience, are as full and ſtrong a proof againſt one, as againſt the other.

But it muſt be ſaid for theſe writers, that they decline all arguments from facts and experience, to give a better account of human nature; but with the ſame juſtice, as if a man was to lay aſide the authority of hiſtory, to give you a truer account of the life of *Alexander*.

Their objection againſt revelation is founded upon the pretended ſufficiency and perfection of human reaſon, to teach all men all that is wiſe, and holy, and divine, in religion. But how do they prove this perfection of human reaſon? Do they appeal to mankind as proofs of it? Do they produce any body of men in this or any other age, that without any aſſiſtance from revelation, have attained

attained to this perfection of religious knowledge? This is not so much as pretended to; the history of such men is entirely wanting. And yet the want of such a fact as this, has even the force of demonstration against this pretended sufficiency of natural reason.

Because it is a matter not capable of any other kind of proof, but must be admitted as certainly true, or rejected as certainly false, according as fact and experience bear witness for or against it.

* For an enquiry about the light, and strength, and sufficiency of reason, to guide and preserve men in the knowledge and practice of true religion, is a question, as *solely* to be resolved by *fact and experience*, as if the enquiry was about the *shape* of man's body, or the *number* of his senses. And to talk of a light and strength of reason, natural to man, which fact and experience have never yet proved, is as egregious nonsense, as to talk of natural senses, or faculties of his body, which fact and experience have never yet discovered,

From the bare consideration of a rational soul in union with a body, and bodily passions, we can neither prove man to be *strong* nor *weak*, *good* nor *bad*, *sickly* nor *sound*, *mortal* nor *immortal*: all these qualities must discover themselves, as the *eye* discovers its degree of *sight*, the *hand* its degree of *strength*.

To enquire therefore, whether men have by nature

nature light ſufficient to guide, and keep them in the true religion; is the ſame appeal to fact and experience, as to enquire, whether men are *mortal, ſickly,* or *ſound:* or how far they can *ſee* and *hear.*

* As therefore theſe gentlemen are, in this debate, without any proof, or even pretence of proof, from experience, ſo their cauſe ought to be looked upon to be as vain and romantic, as if they had aſſerted, that men have ſenſes naturally fitted to hear ſounds, and ſee objects at all diſtances, tho' experience has, from the creation to this time, proved the quite contrary.

For he that aſſerts the ſufficiency of reaſon, to guide men in matters of religion, is not only without any poſitive proof from experience on his ſide, but has the hiſtory of all ages, for near ſix thouſand years, fully demonſtrating the quite contrary.

If ſome other enquirers into human nature, ſhould affirm, that there is in mankind a *natural inſtinct*, ſufficient to make every man, at all times, love every other man, with the *ſame degree* of affection, as he loves himſelf; I ſuppoſe ſuch an opinion would be thought too abſurd to need any confutation. And yet all the abſurdity of it would lie in this, that it affirmed ſomething of the *ſufficiency* of a natural quality in man, which could not be ſupported by a ſingle inſtance of any one man, and was contrary

trary to the experience and hiſtory of every age of the world.

Now this is exactly the caſe of theſe gentlemen: their opinion has neither more or leſs abſurdity in it: they only affirm ſuch a ſufficiency of reaſon to be natural to all men, as cannot be ſupported by a ſingle inſtance of any one man, that ever lived, and is fully contradicted by the experience and hiſtory of every age ſince the creation of the world.

By what has been ſaid, I hope the reader will obſerve, that this enquiry about the perfection or imperfection, the ſtrength or weakneſs, of reaſon in man, as to matters of religion, reſts *wholly* upon fact and experience; and that therefore all ſpeculative reaſonings upon it, are as idle and viſionary, as a ſick man's dreams about health; and are as wholly to be rejected, as any ſpeculative arguments that ſhould pretend to prove, in ſpite of all facts and experience, the *immortality*, and *unalterable* ſtate of human bodies.

Our author himſelf ſeems ſenſible, that the argument drawn from facts and experience, preſſed hard upon his cauſe; and therefore has given the beſt anſwer to it, he can yet think of.

"It cannot, *ſays he*, be imputed to any defect in the light of nature, that the *Pagan* world ran into idolatry; but to their being entirely governed by prieſts, who pretended communication with their gods, and to have thence their revelations,

lations, which they impoſed upon the credulous, as divine oracles."

The juſtneſs of this aſſertion will fully appear by the following illuſtration.

" It cannot be imputed to any defect in the " health and ſoundneſs of man's natural conſti- " tution, that the world has, in all ages, been " over-run with diſtempers; but to their being " entirely governed by phyſicians, who pretend- " ed to I know not what ſecret knowledge of " medicines, which they impoſed upon the ſick- " ly, as infallible remedies."

For, as a perfect ſtate of health, conſcious to itſelf of a ſufficiency of natural ſtrength to keep clear of all diſeaſes, ſeems to be out of all danger from phyſicians; ſo had mankind been ever conſcious to themſelves, of a ſufficient natural knowledge of what is true or falſe in religion; ſuch *as enabled men of the meaneſt capacity to diſtinguiſh between religion and ſuperſtition*,† what *room* had there been for frauds and impoſtures herein?

" Can the ſuperſtition of the *Pagans* be imputed to any defect or inſufficiency in the light of reaſon, when it was wholly owing to their abandoning that divine light; and in defiance of it, running into ſenſeleſs traditions?"‡

But how came it, that they ran into ſenſeleſs traditions? What was it that admitted theſe traditions as juſt and good? Why, it was that faculty

† Page 3. ‡ Page 37.

culty which judges of every thing, and which this writer recommends as an unerring guide. And to say, a man's superstition is not owing to any defect or weakness of his reason, but to his admitting senseless traditions, is as vain, as to say, a man's false reasoning is not owing to any weakness of his reason, but to his proceeding upon foolish and absurd arguments.

He proceeds thus: "It is certainly no good argument against the sufficiency of the divine light of nature, that men could not err, except they left it, and followed vain traditions,"†

This observation has just the same sense and acuteness in it, as if it had been said, *It is certainly no good argument against* the sufficiency of the divine healthfulness *of human nature, that men could not be sickly, except they left it.* and *fell into various distempers: or, against the* sufficiency of the divine strength of natural courage, that men could not be timorous, till they left it, and followed vain fears. For, to prove that reason is sufficient, because every thing that is absurd, is contrary to reason, is like proving our healthfulness to be sufficient, because all distempers are contrary to it: or our courage to be sufficient, because fears and cowardice are contrary to it.

† Second Address, page 39.

Beſides, how is it that men leave their reaſon? Why, juſt as ignorant men leave their knowledge; as dull people leave their wit, or cowards leave their courage. The firſt part of this paragraph tells you of a ſufficiency of the divine light of nature: well; What has this divine light of nature done? What ſufficient effects has it had? Why, it has covered all the world with darkneſs.

Again: Suppoſing that all mankind, even the wiſeſt nations, have for this ſix thouſand years been thus impoſed upon, not knowing how to diſtinguiſh idle tales and fenſeleſs traditions from true religion; is not this a noble foundation for this writer to build the *ſufficiency of the divine light of nature upon?* For ſuppoſing it had been in the greateſt degree inſufficient, what other effect could have followed from it, but only this, that *all mankind*, even the *wiſeſt nations*, ſhould have been over-run with error? And is it not ſtrange, that effects ſhould bear no proportion to their cauſes; that the ſame things ſhould follow from the *ſufficiency* of the divine light of nature, which muſt have followed from its *greateſt inſufficiency?*

* And muſt not the enemies of *reaſon* and *free-thinking* be forced to confeſs, that this writer hath choſen an excellent guide for himſelf; ſince he ſo fully acknowledges, that no one yet has been rightly guided by it? Muſt not his preſent undertaking be granted to be the

the effect of cool and ſober deliberation, ſince it only calls people of *all*, even the *meaneſt*, *capacities*, to ſuch an uſe of their reaſon, as the wiſeſt of men and nations have always been ſtrangers to?

CHAP. V.

Shewing that all the mutability *of our tempers, the* diſorders *of our paſſions, the* corruption *of our hearts, all the* reveries *of the imagination, all the* contradictions *and* abſurdities *that are to be found in human life, and human opinions, are in effect the mutability, diſorders, corruption, and abſurdities of* human reaſon.

IT is the intent of this chapter to ſhew, that altho' common language aſcribes a variety of faculties and principles to the ſoul, imputing this action to the blindneſs of our *paſſions*, that to the inconſtancy of our *tempers*; one thing to the heat of our *imagination*, another to the coolneſs of our *reaſon*; yet, in ſtrictneſs of truth, every thing that is done by us, is the action and operation of our reaſon, and is to be aſcribed to it, as the ſole principle from whence it proceeded, and by which it is governed and effected.

And the different degrees of reaſon are in men, as the different degrees of love and averſion;

as the different degrees of wit, parts, good nature, or ill nature, are in man.

And as all men have naturally more or leſs of theſe qualities, ſo all men have naturally more or leſs reaſon: and the bulk of mankind are as different in reaſon, as they are in theſe qualities.

As love is the ſame paſſion in all men, yet is infinitely different; as hatred is the ſame paſſion in all men, yet with infinite differences; ſo reaſon is the ſame faculty in all men, yet with infinite differences.

And as our paſſions not only make us different from other men, but frequently and almoſt daily different from ourſelves, loving and hating under great inconſtancy; ſo our reaſon is not only different from the reaſon of other men, but is often different from itſelf; by a ſtrange inconſtancy, ſetting up firſt one opinion, and then another.

So that when we talk of *human reaſon*, or a reaſon *common* to mankind, we talk of as *various*, *uncertain*, and *unmeaſurable* a thing, as when we talk of a *love*, an *averſion*, a *good nature*, or *ill nature*, common to mankind; for theſe qualities admit of no variation, uncertainty, or mutability, but ſuch as they directly receive from the *reaſon* of mankind.

For it is as much the reaſon of man that acts in all theſe tempers, and makes them to be juſt what

what they are, as it is the reaſon of man that demonſtrates a mathematical propoſition.

Was our reaſon ſteady, there would be juſt the ſame ſteadineſs and regularity in our tempers; did not reaſon fall into follies and abſurdities, we ſhould have nothing fooliſh or abſurd in our love or averſion. For every humour, every kind of love or averſion, is as ſtrictly the *action* or *operation* of our reaſon, as judgment is the act of our reaſon.

And the tempers and paſſions of a child, differ only from the tempers and paſſions of a man, as the reaſon of a child differs from the reaſon of man.

So that our paſſions and tempers, are the natural real effects of our reaſon, and have no qualities, either good or bad, but ſuch as are to be imputed to it.

A laudable good nature, or a laudable averſion, is only reaſon acting in a *certain manner:* a criminal good nature, or a criminal averſion, is nothing elſe but reaſon acting in another certain manner.

But ſtill it is reaſon, or our underſtanding that is the *only agent* in our bad paſſions, as well as good paſſions; and as much the *ſole agent* in all our paſſions and tempers, as in things of mere ſpeculation.

So that the ſtate of reaſon in human life, is nothing elſe but the ſtate of human tempers and

paſſions; and right reaſon in morality, is nothing elſe but right love, and right averſion.

All *that* therefore which we commonly call the weakneſs, blindneſs, and diſorder of our *paſſions*, is in reality the weakneſs, blindneſs, and diſorder of our *reaſon*. For a right love, or wrong love, denotes only reaſon acting in a *certain*, *particular* manner.

So that if any thing can be ſaid of love, averſion, good nature, or ill nature, as common to mankind; the ſame may be ſaid of reaſon, as common to mankind.

For the diſtinction of our reaſon from our paſſions, is only a diſtinction in language, made at pleaſure; and is no more real than the *deſire* and *inclination* are really different from the *will*. All therefore that is weak and fooliſh in our paſſions, is the weakneſs and folly of our reaſon; all the inconſtancy and caprice of our humours and tempers, is the caprice and inconſtancy of our reaſon.

It is not properly *avarice* that makes men forbid; it is not *ambition* that makes them reſtleſs; it is not *bribery* that makes men ſell their conſciences; it is not *intereſt* that makes them lye, and cheat, and perjure themſelves. What is it therefore? Why it is that *abſolutely perfect* faculty, which our author ſets up as the *unerring* ſtandard of all that is *wiſe*, *holy*, and *good*; it is *reaſon*, the *uſe of reaſon*, *human reaſon*, that does all this.

For

For whether any thing be fit to be done, it is as he says, "reason alone which must judge; as the eye is the sole judge of what is visible, the ear of what is audible, so reason of what is reasonable."

Every thing therefore that is done, every thing that is chosen in human life before any thing else, is as strictly chosen by reason, as every thing that is seen, is seen by the eye; and every thing that is heard, is heard by the ear.

To suppose that reason permits itself to be governed by passions or tempers, but is not the *immediate agent* of all that is done by them, is as absurd, as to suppose that reason permits itself to be governed by the *hand* when it is writing falsly, or the *tongue* when it is talking profanely, but it is not the immediate, direct agent of all that is written and spoken by them.

* *Brutes* are incapable of immorality, because none of their actions are the actions of *reason:* every thing therefore that is immorality, baseness, or villainy in us, must be the act of our reason, otherwise it could no more be immoral, than the actions of brutes.

* If therefore, as this author often saith, reason be the only faculty that distinguisheth us from brutes; it necessarily follows, that those irregularities, whether of humour, passions, or tempers, which cannot be imputed to brutes, must be solely attributed to that faculty by which we are distinguished from brutes; and consequently, every

thing that is fooliſh, vain, ſhameful, falſe, treacherous, and baſe, muſt be the acts of our reaſon; ſince if they were the acts of any thing elſe, they could have no more vanity, falſeneſs, or baſeneſs, than hunger and thirſt.

It is not my intent to condemn our common language, which talks of reaſon and the paſſions, as if they were as different as a *governor* and his *ſubjects*.

Theſe forms of ſpeech are very intelligible and uſeful, and give great life and ornament to all diſcourſes upon morality.

But when perſons aſcribe to reaſon, as a *diſtinct faculty* of human nature, I know not what *abſolute perfection*, making it as immutable, and incapable of any addition or improvement, as God himſelf: it is neceſſary to conſider reaſon, not as it is repreſented in common language, but as it is in reality in itſelf.

Notwithſtanding therefore in common language, our paſſions, and the effects of them, are uſefully diſtinguiſhed from our reaſon, I have here ventured to ſhew, that all the diſorders of human nature, are in effect the diſorders of human reaſon, and that all the perfection or imperfection of our paſſions is the perfection or imperfection of our reaſon.

Our follies and abſurdities of every kind are as neceſſarily to be aſcribed to our reaſon, as the *firſt immediate* cauſe of them, as our wiſdom and diſcretion are to be aſcribed to it in that degree.

The

The difference between reaſon aſſenting to the properties of a *ſquare*, and reaſon acting in motions of deſire or averſion, is only this, that in the latter caſe, it is reaſon acting under a ſenſe of its own good or evil, in the former caſe, it is reaſon acting under a ſenſe of *magnitude*.

And as the relations of magnitude, as they are the objects of our reaſon, are only the objects of its aſſent or diſſent; ſo good and evil, as they are objects of our reaſon, are only the objects of its *deſire* or *averſion:* and as the aſſent or diſſent, in matters of ſpeculation, whether right or wrong, is ſolely the act of our reaſon; ſo deſire or averſion, in human life, whether right or wrong, is equally the act of our reaſon.

We often ſay, that our paſſions deceive us, or perſuade us; but this is no more ſtrictly ſo, than when we ſay, our *intereſt* deceived, or a bribe blinded us. For bribes and intereſt are not active principles, nor have any power of deception; it is only our reaſon that gives them a falſe value, and prefers them to a greater good.

It is juſt ſo in what we call the deceit of our paſſions: they meddle with us no more than bribes meddle with us; but that pleaſurable perception, which is to be found in certain enjoyments, is by our reaſon preferred to that better good, which we might expect from ſelf-denial.

We ſay again, that our paſſions paint things in falſe colours, and preſent to our minds vain appearances of happineſs.

But this is no more ſtrictly true, than when we ſay, our *imagination* forms caſtles in the air. For the imagination ſignifies no diſtinct faculty from our reaſon, but only reaſon acting upon our *own ideas*.

So when our paſſions are ſaid to give falſe colours to things, or preſent vain appearances of happineſs, it is only our reaſon acting upon its own ideas of *good* and *evil*, juſt as it acts upon its own ideas of *architecture*, in forming caſtles in the air.

So that all *that* which we call different faculties, tempers, and paſſions, ſtrictly ſpeaking, means nothing elſe, but the various acts of one and the ſame rational principle, which has different names, according to the objects that it acts upon, and the manner of its acting.

In ſome things it is called ſpeculative, in others it is called practical reaſon. And we may as juſtly think our ſpeculative reaſon is a different faculty from our practical reaſon, as that our averſions, or likings, are not as fully to be aſcribed to our reaſon, as ſyllogiſms and demonſtrations.

* It was truly reaſon that made *Medea* kill her children, that made *Cato* kill himſelf, that made Pagans offer human ſacrifices to idols; that made *Epicurus* deny a providence, *Mahomet* pretend a revelation; that made ſome men ſceptics, others bigots; ſome enthuſiaſts, others profane; that made *Hobbes* aſſert all religion to be human invention, and *Spinoſa* to declare trees, and ſtones, and

and animals to be parts of God; that makes free-thinkers deny freedom of will, and fatalists exhort to a reformation of manners; that made *Vaux* a conspirator, and *Ludlow* a regicide; that made *Muggleton* a fanatic; and *Rochester* a libertine. It was as truly reason that did all these things, as it is reason that demonstrates mathematical propositions.

Medea and *Cato* acted as truly according to the judgment of their reason at that time, as the confessor that chuses rather to suffer, than deny his faith.

Had not *Medea* and *Cato* thought it best to do what they did, at the time they did it, they would no more have done it than the *confessor* would chuse to suffer rather than deny his faith, unless he had judged best so to do.

And when we say reason governs the passions, it means no more, than that reason governs itself; that it acts with deliberation and attention, does not yield to its first judgments, but uses second, and third thoughts.

So that guarding against the passions, is only guarding against its own first judgments and opinions; that is guarding against itself.

To all this may, perhaps, be objected, that our passions arise from bodily motions, and depend upon the state of our blood and animal spirits, and therefore what we do under their commotions, cannot be attributed to our reason.

It is readily granted, that the body has this ſhare in our paſſions and tempers: but then the ame thing muſt be granted of the body, in all the acts and operations of the mind. So that if our deſires and averſions cannot be imputed to our reaſon, becauſe of the joint operation of the animal ſpirits in them; no more can ſyllogiſms and demonſtrations be attributed to our reaſon, becauſe the operation of bodily ſpirits concurreth in the forming of them.

For the moſt abſtract thought, and ſpeculation of the mind, has as truly the *conjunct* operation of bodily ſpirits, as our ſtrongeſt deſires or averſions. And it is as much owing to the ſtate of the body, that ſuch ſpeculations are what they are, as it is owing to the ſtate of the body, that ſuch paſſions are what they are.

For the motions of the bodily ſpirits are inſeparable from, and according to, the ſtate and action of the mind: when reaſon is in ſpeculation of a trifle, they concur but weakly; when reaſon ſpeculates intenſely, their operation is increaſed. And ſometimes the attention of the mind is ſo great, and has ſo engaged and called in all the animal ſpirits to its aſſiſtance, that the operations of our ſenſes are ſuſpended, and we neither ſee, nor feel, till the attention of the mind has let the ſpirits return to all the parts of the body.

Now will any one ſay, that theſe intenſe thoughts are leſs the acts of the mind, becauſe they have a greater concurrence of bodily ſpirits, than

than when it is acting with indifference, and ſo has a leſſer quantity of bodily ſpirits?

Yet this might as well be ſaid, as to ſay, that the aſſent or diſſent, in ſpeculation, is the act of our reaſon; but liking or diſliking, loving or hating, are not the acts of our reaſon, becauſe they have a greater concurrence of bodily ſpirits.

For, as the mind is in a different ſtate when it deſires good, or fears evil, from what it is when it only compares two triangles; ſo the motions of the bodily ſpirits, have only *ſuch* a difference, as is *correſpondent* to theſe two ſtates of the mind. They act and join as much in comparing the triangles, as in the deſire of good, or fear of evil. And the mind is juſt as much governed by the body, in its paſſions. as in its calmeſt contemplations.

For as the gentle operation of the animal ſpirits is then correſpondent to the ſtate and action of the mind; ſo in all our paſſions, the ſtrong and increaſed motion of the animal ſpirits, is equally correſpondent thereto.

So that reaſon is no more the agent, in our tempers and paſſions, than in our dry and ſedate ſpeculations.

It may happen, that a man may have as great an eagerneſs in ſolving a mathematical problem, as another hath to obtain any great good, or avoid any great evil.

But

But may it therefore be ſaid, that it is not reaſon that ſolves the problem, becauſe the bodily ſpirits are ſo active in it?

To draw now ſome plain conſequences from the foregoing account.

Firſt, If reaſon be the *univerſal agent* in the natural man; if all the difference among *ſuch* men, is only ſuch a difference as reaſon makes, then nothing can be more extravagant, than to affirm any thing concerning the degree of perfection, or imperfection of reaſon, as *common* to man. It is as wild and romantic, as to pretend to ſtate the meaſure of folly and wiſdom, of fear and courage, of pride and humility, of good humour and ill-humour, *common* to mankind: for as theſe ſtates of the mind, are only ſo many different ſtates of reaſon; ſo no uncertainty belongs to them, but what, in the *ſame degree*, belongs to *reaſon*.

Secondly, Granting that all matters of religion muſt be agreeable to *right*, *unprejudiced* reaſon; yet this could be no ground for receiving nothing in religion, but what *human* reaſon could prove to be neceſſary; for *human* reaſon is no more *right*, *unprejudiced* reaſon, than a ſinner is *ſinleſs*, or a man an *angel*.

Granting again, that a man may go a great way towards rectifying his reaſon, and laying aſide its prejudices; yet no particular man can be a *better judge* of the rectitude of his *own reaſon*, than he is of the rectitude of his own *ſelf-love*, the

the brightneſs of his own *parts*, and the depth of his own *judgment*.

For there is nothing to deceive him in *ſelf-love*, in the opinion of his *own merit*, *wit*, and *judgment*, but what has the ſame power to deceive him, in the opinion of his own reaſon. And if, as our author ſays, " It be the fate of moſt ſects to be the fondeſt of their ugliеſt brats."† None ſeem ſo inevitably expoſed to this fatality, as thoſe whoſe religion is to have no form, but ſuch as it receives from their own hearts.

Thirdly, A man that has his religion to chuſe, and with this precious privilege, that he need not allow any thing to be matter of religion, but what his own reaſon can prove to be ſo, is in as fair a way to be governed by his *paſſions*, as he that has his *condition* of life to chuſe, with the liberty of taking that which his own reaſon directs him to.

Does any one ſuppoſe, that nothing but *reaſon* would direct him in the choice of his condition? Or that he would make the better choice, becauſe he proceeded upon this maxim, that nothing could be right, but that which was agreeable to his *own reaſon?* Or that his tempers, his prejudices, his ſelf-love, his paſſions, his partiality, would have no influence upon his choice, becauſe

† Page 184.

cauſe he had reſigned himſelf up to his *own reaſon?*

Now it is juſt the ſame in the choice of a religion, as in the choice of a condition of life: as it is not a matter of ſpeculation, but of *good* and *evil*; ſo if it is left to be determined by our *own reaſon*, it rather appeals to our *tempers*, than employs our reaſon; and to reſign ourſelves up to our own reaſon, to tell us what ought, or ought not to be a matter of religion, is only reſigning ourſelves up to our tempers, to to take what we *like*, and refuſe what we *diſlike* in religion.

* In a word; when *ſelf-love* is a proper arbitrator betwixt a man and his adverſary; when *revenge* is a juſt judge of meekneſs; when *pride* is a true lover of humility; when *falſhood* is a teacher of truth; when luſt is a faſt friend of chaſtity; when the *fleſh* leads to the ſpirit; when *ſenſuality* delights in ſelf-denial; when *partiality* is a promoter of equity; when the *palate* can taſte the difference between ſin and holineſs: when the *hand* can feel the truth of a propoſition; then may *human reaſon* be a proper arbitrator between God and man, the ſole, final, juſt judge of all that ought, or ought not to be a matter of a *holy*, *divine*, and *heavenly* religion.

Laſtly, If this be the ſtate of reaſon, then to pretend, that our reaſon, is too perfect to be governed by any thing but its own light, is the ſame extra-

extravagance, as to pretend, that our love is too pure to be governed by any thing but its own inclinations, our hatred too juſt to be governed by any thing but its own motions. For if all that is baſe and criminal in love, all that is unjuſt and wicked in hatred, is to be imputed to our reaſon; then no perfection can be aſcribed to our reaſon, but ſuch as is to be aſcribed to our love and hatred.

An Extract from Mr. LAW's

SERIOUS ANSWER

To Dr. TRAPP's Four Sermons,

On the Sin, Folly, and Danger of being righteous over-much.

1.* MIGHT I follow the *bent* of my own mind, I ſhould be wholly employed in ſetting forth the infinite love of God to mankind in Chriſt Jeſus, and endeavouring to draw all men to the belief and acknowledgment of it. This *one great mercy* of God, which makes the *one* happineſs of all mankind, ſo juſtly deſerves all our thoughts and meditations, ſo highly enlightens, and improves every mind that is attentive to it, ſo removes all the evils of this preſent world, ſo ſweetens every ſtate of life, ſo inflames the heart with the love of every divine and human virtue, that he is no ſmall loſer, whoſe mind is, either by writing or reading, detained from the view and contemplation of it.

2. When

2. When the myſtery of divine love was firſt manifeſted to the world, it produced its proper effects. It put an end to all *ſelfiſhneſs and diviſion; for all that believed were of one heart and one ſpirit, and had all things common.*† And indeed, under the real influence and full belief of this great myſtery of divine love, there ſeems to be no room left for any thing elſe amongſt Chriſtians, but returns of love to God, and flowing out of love towards one another.

3. * It is ſo difficult to enter into controverſy without being, or at leaſt ſeeming in ſome degree unkind to the perſon one oppoſes, that it is with great reluctance I have entered upon my preſent undertaking; having nothing more deeply riveted in my heart, than an univerſal love and kindneſs for all men, and more eſpecially for thoſe whom God has called to be my fellow-labourers, in promoting the ſalvation of mankind. But however unwilling, yet I find myſelf obliged to conſider and lay open many grievous faults in the Doctor's diſcourſe; and to ſhew to all Chriſtians, that the deareſt intereſts of their ſouls are much endangered by it.

4. * And this I muſt do with great plainneſs and ſincerity in the love of truth, and under the direction of charity, ſaying nothing in the ſpirit of an *adverſary*, ſparing nothing thro' *reſpect of perſons*, ſacrificing nothing to the taſte or temper of the world, but ſetting every thing in that

† Acts ii. 44.

that naked light, in which the Spirit of God repreſents it to my own mind.

5. The Doctor undertakes to ſtir up, and alarm mankind with the *ſin*, *folly* and *danger* of being *righteous over-much*. The text from which he has the title of his diſcourſes is very unhappily choſen, and muſt be looked upon rather as a ſevere reproach, than any kind of juſtification of it. The text is indeed in the writings of *Solomon*, and as it ſtands there, has no hurt in it; becauſe as the royal preacher ſometimes introduces fools, and ſometimes infidels making their ſpeeches, ſo there is a neceſſity of ſuppoſing that to be the caſe in the Doctor's text; not only from the context which plainly ſhews there are two perſons introduced, the one *for*, the other *againſt* righteouſneſs; but becauſe the words, otherwiſe, cannot be taken in a ſenſe that is tolerable, or conſiſtent with the common *notions* of piety.

6. Is it not therefore ſtrange, that the Doctor ſhould think it right, to limit, explain, and model both the letter and ſpirit of the goſpel by ſuch a ſaying in the writings of *Solomon* as muſt be aſcribed to the ſpirit and mouth of an infidel? Is it not ſtranger, that ſuch a text, ſo offenſive to piety, ſhould have not only been ſo long dwelt upon in the Doctor's three churches, but ſent abroad into the world, as a proper key to all the practical ſayings, parables, and doctrines of Jeſus Chriſt?

7. Supported

7. Supported by this text, the Doctor endeavours to deter and fright Chriſtians from the ſin, folly and danger of being righteous over-much, and from what he calls the baneful plague of enthuſiaſm. But then it is matter of juſt complaint, that he does all this, without ever ſhewing in any part of his diſcourſe, wherein true righteouſneſs, or the right and ſober ſpirit of piety conſiſts. And if he ſuppoſed all his readers to be already well acquainted with the nature, and extent of Chriſtian holineſs, there would then have been little occaſion for his preſent undertaking.

8. But the Doctor overlooks this important matter. He neither ſuppoſes them to have this knowledge, nor endeavours to help them to it; but in a flow of zeal, reflects at large upon all attempts towards a piety, that is not *modern*, *common*, and according to the preſent faſhion of religion in the world. Thus, you every where find ſevere reflections caſt upon pretenders to piety, pretended ſpiritualiſts; great accuſations of exceſſes, extraordinaries and by-paths; but no where a word or a hint, in favour of thoſe, who would only be ſo extraordinary, and ſo much out of the *common* paths, as the bleſſed ſaints and martyrs of the primitive church were. No where are *ſuch people* told, that he wiſhes them *God ſpeed*, that *their zeal* is much wanted both amongſt *clergy* and *laity*, and that the goſpel ſuffers becauſe we know not where to find living examples

ples of its purity and perfection. No where are they told, that he writes not againſt them, that he loves their ſpirit, and ſhould be glad to add new fervours to it: nor what Chriſtian perfection is, what a holineſs of body, ſoul and ſpirit it requires; how powerfully all are called to it, how earneſtly all ought to aſpire after it, and how ſadly miſtaken, what enemies to themſelves they are, who for the ſake of any, or all the things in the world, die leſs purified and perfect, than they might have been.

9. If we had to do with *one ſingle* perſon ſincerely good, yet ſeeming to carry matters too high in ſome part of his duty, and intended privately to diſſuade him from ſuch heights; yet even this, thus privately done and to a perſon of piety, would be exceeding *dangerous* and *unjuſtifiable*; unleſs we took the utmoſt care at the ſame time, to *keep up* the pious zeal of his mind, to ſhew him wherein true perfection conſiſted, and to encourage his utmoſt endeavours after it.

But if this caution, inſtruction and encouragement, cannot be omitted without great hurt to religion, when we ſpeak only to a perſon of piety, and in private, about any religious *extremes*, what muſt be ſaid of the Doctor's conduct? Who to the world dead in treſpaſſes and ſin, preaches up the *ſin*, *folly* and *danger* of *being* righteous over-much? To the world *eating and drinking and riſing up to play*, he harangues upon

temperance, abſtinence, mortification and ſeverity of life! To the world aſleep, inſenſible, and careleſs, not only of the purity and perfection, but of the firſt principles of the goſpel, he boldly and raſhly approaches all appearances of holineſs, that are uncommon and extraordinary! To *no* part of the world does he repreſent or propoſe the *perfection* of the goſpel, or recommend it as that, which deſerves all that they can do, or ſuffer for the ſake of it.

This, therefore, I am obliged to point out, as a *fundamental defect* in the Doctor's diſcourſe, and ſuch as renders it an evil *temptation*, a dangerous *ſnare*, and fatal *deluſion* to all thoſe who do not read it with a full, and thorough diſlike.

10. * Coldneſs, indifference, and a lifeleſs, outward compliance with the duties of religion: a ſlavery to eaſe, ſoftneſs, and ſenſual pleaſures: a criminal conformity to the ſpirit, faſhions, and corruptions of the world; unmortified paſſions; conniving at favourite ſin; deep roots of pride, partiality, and ſelf-love: an unawakened conſcience; an inſenſibility of their corrupt, unreformed, unregenerate ſtate: a proneneſs to be content and ſatisfied with poor beginnings, names and appearances of virtue; is perhaps the ſtate of more than two *thirds* of thoſe that are looked upon to be the religious amongſt us.

Now the Doctor's diſcourſe has a direct and natural fitneſs to lull all theſe people aſleep, to

ſuppreſs

upon the madneſs, danger, and folly of too much ſuppreſs all ſtirring and intentions of amendment, to keep up and nouriſh every diſorder of their hearts, to increaſe their blindneſs, and awaken nothing in them, but a *hurtful zeal* to cenſure and condemn all thoſe that are endeavouring to practiſe the *uncommon* piety of the goſpel.

There is ſcarce a reader amongſt this number of people, whether he be *layman* or *clergyman*, but will find this effect from the Doctor's inſtructions; he will begin to take *freſh comfort* in his ſtate, to think himſelf *happy* for having had no aſpirings after high improvements in piety; he will not only be content with his corruptions, but be fixed and hardened againſt all *inward* and *outward* calls to a ſolid piety; he will approve of the deadneſs and inſenſibility of his own heart, and acquieſce in it, as his juſt ſecurity, from the *ſin* and *folly* and *danger* of being *righteous over-much*.

11. Again, others there are, I make no doubt in all parts of the kingdom, both amongſt clergy and laity, men and women, rich and poor, whoſe conſciences are greatly awakened, who ſee the general apoſtacy from the religion of the goſpel, whoſe ſouls are wanting and wiſhing nothing ſo much, as to know how all that they *are*, all that they *have*, and all that they *do*, may be one continual ſacrifice, and ſervice of love unto God; to know how, and in what manner, and to what extent, and by what means, they may and ought

to

to *be perfect, even as their Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

Now, who can help looking with *love* and *compaſſion* upon thoſe poor ſouls, longing for that which has been ſo long loſt; aſking after that, which ſcarce any one will tell them any thing of, and wanting to enter upon paths where there are few or no footſteps to be ſeen, nor any travellers in motion?

Had theſe awakened ſouls lived in the firſt ages of the church, nay, I may ſay in almoſt any till theſe very laſt ages of it, their zeal had not been in vain: they could have been at no loſs to know *how* they were to proceed in their heavenly purpoſe; becauſe they would have been immediately directed to ſome living examples of the perfect ſpirit of the goſpel, who were publicly known and acknowledged by all to be ſuch, who had the ſame undiſputed right, to point out the Chriſtian profeſſion, as *John* the Baptiſt had to preach up *mortification* and *ſelf-denial*. Every age, and every ſex, prieſts and people of all conditions, had their known ſtandards to reſort to, where every one was ſure to be guided, aſſiſted, and encouraged to live up to that height of holineſs.

12. But now how does the Doctor deal with this ſort of people? What *love*, *aſſiſtance*, and *encouragement* does he reach out to them? Why, truly, he conſiders them as a *deluded*, *weak*, or *hypocritical*, or *half-thinking* people, that diſturb

the Christian church with their projects; who are to be set right by returning to the instructions of common sense. He ridicules every step they must take in their intended progress, by adding absurdities of his own invention to it. There is nothing for such people throughout his whole discourse, but reproaches, and discouragement.

Are they desirous of all that *self-denial*, all such *mortification* of bodily appetites and sensual passions, as may best fit them to be temples of the Holy Spirit? He ridicules them, as holding the sinfulness of *smelling a rose*.

Do they begin to discover the *deep corruption* of their nature, the superficialness and weakness of their virtues, and to fear they have as yet scarce come up to the righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees?* He tells them "The great enemy of souls adapts his temptations to all sorts of tempers and dispositions. Those who are disposed to be good and virtuous, if he cannot prevail with them to be vicious, commonly so called, he labours to make them over virtuous, that is vicious, tho' not commonly so called; and so involves them in dangers and mischiefs.

Are they such as are desirous of reforming their own lives, by bringing all their actions to the standard of the gospel, and wholly intent upon their own advancement in merely *practical piety?*

To

To these he shews, that they are in the very paths that lead, and always did lead to *fanatic madness*.

Thus says he, "To what a height of *fanatic madness* in *doctrines*, as well as practice are some advanced, who set out at first with the appearance of more than ordinary sanctity in *practice only?*" And again, "I do say that in all ages enthusiasts have been *righteous over-much*; they began with the last mentioned, and ended with the other; *and is it not so now?*"

13. Further, are there others, who begin to feel the *mystery* of their redemption discovered in their own souls, so that they hunger and thirst after the manifestation of the divine life in them, desiring that Christ may be wholly formed and revealed in them, that they may *put on* Christ, *be* in him *new creatures*, led by his spirit, *growing* in him as branches in the vine, hearing the word of God written and spoken in their hearts, in his light *seeing* light, and *tasting* in the inward man *the powers of the world to come?*

* For such as these, the Doctor has this instruction: "That there is, says he, such a thing as the operation of the Holy Spirit upon our souls, tho' we cannot distinguish it from the operations of our own minds, is not only granted, but insisted upon by all sincere and sober Christians. But what *reason*, what *scripture*, is there for this inward *seeing*, *hearing*, *feeling?*"

* According therefore to the Doctor's divinity both reaſon and ſcripture require, that the true Chriſtian be *inwardly blind*, inwardly *deaf*, and void of all inward *feeling*. For if neither ſcripture nor reaſon will allow of any inward ſenſes, then they muſt both of them require an *inward inſenſibility*. But as ſcripture from *Geneſis* to the *Revelation*, is full of proofs of theſe inward ſenſes, I ſhall not now produce them: I ſhall here only obſerve that *hardneſs of heart* is a well known phraſe of ſcripture, and every where *ſignifies* ſome degree of *blindneſs*, *deafneſs*, and loſs of *feeling*. I ſuppoſe it will not be ſaid that it ſignifies blindneſs, or loſs of *outward eyes* and *ears*, or feeling: neither does it ſignify a want of *human reaſon*, or natural *ſagacity*; for *learned*, *polite*, and *ingenious* men, are full as ſubject as others to this hardneſs of heart. Therefore the ſcripture is as open, as plain and expreſs in declaring *for inward ſenſes*, as it is in declaring againſt ſuch a thing, as *hardneſs* of *heart*. Hardneſs of heart is that to the *inward* ſenſes, which a deep, or as we call it, *dead ſleep*, is to the *outward*. It keeps our inward eyes, and ears, and feeling all locked up.

14. A broken and a contrite heart unlocks our inward ſenſes, and makes us ſee, and hear, and feel the things, which could no more be ſeen, heard or felt before, than a man in a deep ſleep can hear, and ſee, and feel the things, that are ſaid and done about him.

Water

Water frozen into a rock of ice, is very different from the same water melted, warmed, and moving under the influence of the sun and the air.

Now this difference between water *flowing*, full of *light* and *air*, and the same water frozen into a dark, hard rock of ice, is but a small resemblance of the difference between a *hardened* heart, and the *same heart* become broken.

15. But I return to the Doctor. His further instruction to this sort of people stands thus. They are told by him, "that their high notions of spiritual improvements have this effect: on the one hand, they lead to *presumption*, on the other to *desperation*." "He has been told, *he says*, that some have been actually thrown into despair. They have been made stark mad, and received into *Bedlam* as such. *And then he cries out*, Was the religion of Jesus Christ intended to make people mad? Is this for the honour of Christianity."

* I shall not here question the Doctor's information. I shall only observe, that when our Saviour was upon earth, there were two sorts of *mad* people about him; the *one sort* ran about in disorder, tore their cloaths and cut their own flesh; the other sort raved in malice, threw dust into the air, stopped their ears, and cried out *crucify him, crucify him.*

* It may be asked, which of these two sorts of people were in the most disordered and distem-

pered ſtate? Whoſe madneſs was the moſt ſhocking, that of the lunatics, or that of the *High Prieſts*, *Scribes*, and *Phariſees?* Thoſe who only mangled their own bodies, or thoſe that thirſted after the blood of Chriſt, and would have no reſt till they ſaw his body nailed to the croſs? To me the *lunatics*, ſeem to be in a *leſs degree* of diſorder; and the reaſon is this, becauſe I ſee that our Saviour could heal them, but not the Prieſts, Scribes, and Phariſees.

Now is it reaſonable, on account of the *madneſs* of theſe Prieſts, Scribes and Doctors of the law, to ſay, "Is this for the honour of the *Jewiſh law?* Were the *law and the prophets intended to make people mad?*" If the Doctor knows how to excuſe the law and the prophets, tho' theſe great ſtudents of them were in ſuch a deſperate ſtate of *madneſs*, then Chriſtianity may be blameleſs; tho' here and there a Chriſtian (ſo called) may be fit for *Bedlam*.

16. Again, are there others, who deſire to bring the whole form of their lives under rules of religion, to let the ſpirit of the goſpel give laws to the moſt ordinary, indifferent, innocent and lawful things and enjoyments; ſo that, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, *whether they eat or drink, or whatever they do*, they may *do all to the glory of God?*

Theſe people are told by the Doctor, that "Wholly abſtaining from things indifferent and innocent in themſelves, as forbidden and unlawful,

ful, is a signal instance of being righteous overmuch; and so on the other hand, is making things indifferent to be necessary, and matters of duty."

What is here said has some truth in it, and might be useful in its proper place, and under right limitations. But as it here stands, it is a grievous *snare* and *deceit* to the reader. For it is to signify to him, that *wholly abstaining from* things in themselves indifferent, cannot be made a *matter* of true religious advancement; but is a blameable instance of excess. If the Doctor had meant only to teach, that we should not abstain from things indifferent, as if they were in *themselves unlawful*, he should have told his readers that he meant no more. He should have told them, that such things might be abstained from justly, upon a better principle, and so become very expedient and edifying; and that he did not condemn the abstaining from such things, when it was done upon a motive of piety, or for the better fulfilling any duty; but only when it was done from a superstitious notion, of the things being in themselves sin.

Had he done this, he had prevented the *snare* and *deceit* that is now in his assertion: but then he would at the same time have made it useless, and insignificant to the design of his discourse, and would have left a door open for such advances in piety, as he is now opposing.

17. It might eaſily be ſhewn, if this was the place for it, that no one can truly fulfil the two firſt and greateſt of all laws, that of loving God with all our heart, and that of loving our neighbour as ourſelves, unleſs he be willing and glad, in many inſtances, *wholly* to *abſtain* from things in themſelves indifferent and innocent.

St. *Paul*'s doctrine is this: *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient.* This ſets the matter right on both ſides. It leaves things in their own ſtate of indifference, and yet carries us to a higher rule of acting. It directs us wholly to abſtain from, ſome things innocent in themſelves, and to do things becauſe they are *expedient*; becauſe by ſo doing, we ſhew a higher love of God, and a greater deſire of doing every thing to his glory; becauſe we thereby attain a greater conqueſt over all our inward and outward enemies, and in a greater degree help forward the edification of our neighbour.

18. Let us look at St. *Paul*'s doctrine and examples in the two following remarkable inſtances.

Firſt where he declares it to be *lawful* for thoſe that preach the goſpel to live by the goſpel, and yet makes it matter of the greateſt *comfort* and joy to himſelf, that he wholly abſtained from this *lawful* thing: and declares, it were better for him to die, than that this *rejoicing* ſhould be taken from him. He appeals to his daily and nightly labouring with his own hands, that ſo he might preach the goſpel freely, and not be chargeable

chargeable to thoſe that heard him. And this he ſaid he did, not for want of authority to do otherwiſe, but that he might make himſelf an example unto them who followed him.

* What awakening inſtructions are here given to us of the clergy, in a matter of the greateſt moment! How ought every one to be frighted at the thought of deſiring or ſeeking a ſecond living, or of rejoicing at great pay where there is but little duty, when the apoſtle's rejoicing conſiſted in this, that he had paſſed thro' all the fatigues and perils of preaching the goſpel without any pay at all! How *cautious*, nay, how *fearful* ought we to be, of going ſo far as the *ſecular* laws permit us, when the apoſtle thought it more deſirable to loſe his life, than to go ſo far as the general laws of the goſpel would have ſuffered him!

* It is *looked upon* as *lawful*, to get ſeveral preferments, and to make a gain of the goſpel, by hiring others to do duty for us at a lower rate. —It is looked upon as lawful, to quit a cure of ſouls of a ſmall income, for no other reaſon but becauſe we can get another of a greater. ——It is looked upon as lawful, for a clergyman to apply the revenue of a church, which he ſerves, to his own uſe, tho' he has more than a ſufficient competency of his *own*, and much more than the apoſtle could get by his labour.— It is looked upon as lawful, for the clergy to live in ſtate and equipage, to buy purple and fine linen out of the revenue of the church.——It is looked upon as lawful, for clergymen to enrich

their families, and bring up their children in the fashionable vanities of a worldly and expensive life, by money got by preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

* But now *supposing* all these to be *lawful*, what *comfort* and *joy* might we treasure up for ourselves, what benefit and edification should we give to our neighbour, if we wholly abstained from all these things, not by working day and night with our hands, as the great apostle did, but by limiting our wants and desires according to the plain demands of nature, and a religious self-denial?

The other instance of the apostle's I appeal to is that, where he says, it is good neither to eat "flesh, nor drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth and is offended.. And again, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, that I may not offend my brother." Hence it appears, that to abstain from things indifferent, as if they were in themselves sinful, is wrong; but to *abstain* from them upon other motives, may be matter of necessary duty and edification. But since the Doctor has not looked at this matter in the twofold view in which only it can be justly apprehended, he cannot well be excused from that *half thinking*, which he so much reproaches in others.

19. But I must further observe, that there is yet more of *snare* and *deception*, in what the Doctor

Doctor has here said of this matter. For the reader may thereby be easily brought into a belief, that things in themselves indifferent, are not *proper subjects* of religion, or means of advancing in piety; and that he need not bring himself under *any laws* of religion, concerning such things.

Whereas nothing can be more contrary to truth, or more hurtful to piety than such a belief. "Eating, drinking, sleeping, dressing, resting, labour, conversation, trade, diversion, and money, are in themselves indifferent."

But it is in the religious, or irreligious use of these that some people *live* up to the spirit of the gospel, and others *wholly die* to it. And it is from strict laws of religion, made concerning these indifferent things, that the spiritual life of every one is to be built up.

And it is for want of religious laws in the use of these things, that the spirit of the gospel cannot get possession of our hearts. For our souls may receive an infinite hurt, and be rendered incapable of all true virtue, merely by the use of innocent and lawful things.

* What is more innocent than rest and retirement? And yet what more dangerous than sloth and idleness? How lawful is the care of a family? And yet how are many people rendered incapable of all virtue, by a wordly, sollicitous temper? How lawful is it for us, to eat and drink in such quantity and quality, as may render the body

healthful, and useful to the soul? And yet what danger is there in eating and drinking if we are not under this strict law of religion, to seek *only* health; and not the pleasure of various tastes in our food? What *sensuality* of discourse shall we not every day fall into, unless it be a fixed law to us, to speak of no other joy in our food, but that which is expressed by our grace before, and after our meals?

How indifferent a thing, and innocent in itself, is *dress?* And yet what more hurtful and abounding with sin? It reaches and affects the heart and soul both of the wearer and beholder. Its evils are innumerable; it has destroyed, and does destroy like a pestilence.

Now how can all these evils, which arise from the use of these things indifferent and lawful in themselves be avoided, but by making every thing in our *common* and *ordinary* life to be matter of conscience, which is to have its *rule* and *measure* and *end* from the spirit of religion? And indeed what other end is there in religion, but to govern every motion, and desire of our hearts? To make all the actions of our common life pure and holy, by being done in strict conformity to the will of God, and under the light and guidance of his Holy Spirit? So that the very outward *form* of our lives, and the *whole manner* of our living in the world, whether in estates, shops, or farms, whether in eating, drinking, or dressing, may make it known to all the world, that

we

we do every thing in the name of Jesus Christ, suitably to that high vocation wherewith we are called.

20. No folly of life whatever can be rightly removed but by being thus wholly cut up by the roots, by making every thing subject to the spirit of religion.

That which is to direct our *prayers*, and govern us at church, must with the same strictness direct our conversation, and govern our dealings in common life. We must dress with the same spirit that we give *alms*, or go to *prayers*; that is, we must no more dress to be seen and admired by others, than we must give alms, or make prayers for the same reasons.

And when religion has its seat in our hearts, and is the work of God's spirit in us, this acting according to its direction in *all things*, will be so far from seeming to be a hard lesson, that it would be a pain to act otherwise. It is no hardship to a *miser* to do *every* thing suitably to the greedy desires of his heart. The ambitious man is not troubled with acting always agreeable to his ambition. If these persons are in trouble or distress, or under any dejection, you can only comfort the one with honour and power, and the other with filthy lucre and gain.

21. Yet the Doctor complains of the *Treatise upon Christian Perfection*, because Christians in *sickness, distress, and dejection* of *spirit*, are there directed to seek for comfort and refreshment in God

God alone! Our bleſſed Lord is very ſhort and yet very full upon this article. He only ſays, *Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.* And the Doctor might as well be angry at the goſpel for having made no mention of worldly amuſements proper for ſick and diſtreſſed Chriſtians, as at the treatiſe of Chriſtian Perfection, for not having done the ſame.

If I ſhould ſee a ſick man ſmelling a roſe, I ſhould not reprove him. But if he wanted comfort in his ſtate, I would no more direct him to *any thing*, but the great and ſolid comforts that are to be found in the love, and goodneſs of God, than I would direct him to another Saviour, than Jeſus Chriſt.

* For to tell Chriſtians that in *ſome kinds* of trouble, they might juſtly ſeek for relief in reading a *play*, or wanton *Bucolic*, inſtead of the *goſpel*; would be the ſame abſurdity, as to have told people in our Saviour's time, that in ſome ſorts of diſtreſs, they might juſtly have recourſe to *Simon Magus*, inſtead of Jeſus Chriſt.

22. But now to look back a little. I have conſidered the bulk of thoſe Chriſtians that are the moſt likely to be the Doctor's readers, under two characters. The one as living ſome way or other in a partial, falſe, ſuperficial, or half ſtate of piety; the other as an awakened people, called by the Spirit of God to come out of the common corruption of the times. I have ſhewn that the Doctor's diſcourſe (where it is not diſliked) muſt

do

do great hurt, and have dreadful effects upon thoſe two ſorts of people; the one ſort it ſeals up in a falſe ſecurity, ſleeping in the chambers of death, without any oil in their veſſels; the other it frightens, and diſcourages from their pious intentions of trimming their lamps with all diligence, and living upon the watch for the midnight call of the bridegroom's voice.

That I may therefore do all the good I can to both theſe ſorts of people, that I may awaken the one from their falſe ſecurity in their form of godlineſs, and encourage the other to proceed with all earneſtneſs, after every degree of Chriſtian holineſs; I ſhall before I proceed any further, lay down a ſhort account of the whole *ground* of the Chriſtian religion, that every one may clearly ſee, why we want the Chriſtian religion to ſave us, what it is to do for us; and how it is done.

23. [1] Man was created a living image of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.

" 2. This whole viſible world, as far as the ſtars, or any corporeal being reaches, takes up that extent of ſpace, where *Lucifer* and his angels before their fall, had their glorious kingdom. So far as this viſible frame of nature extends, ſo far was the extent of that kingdom †

" 3. That the *place* or *extent* of this world, was the place or extent of their kingdom, is probable from

† N. B. This, with ſeveral of the particulars that follow are probable, but not ſupported by ſcripture. This is the theory of *Jacob Behme*, ingenious, but quite incapable of proof.

from the two following ~~reaſons~~: firſt, becauſe the place of this world is now their habitation. For we muſt by no means ſuppoſe that God brought them from ſome other region into this world, only to tempt man. No: but they are here *now*, becauſe they were created to dwell *here*. For fallen angels do not leave the *place* of their ſin and fall: they live in the *defilements* and *diſorders* of their ſpoiled kingdom; and in that place they find their hell and torments, where they extinguiſhed their light and joy. Secondly, becauſe the whole extent of the world, and every thing in it, *ſun*, *moon*, *ſtars*, *fire*, *air*, *water*, and *earth*, *ſtones*, *minerals*, muſt all be *diſſolved*, and paſs thro' a *purifying fire*. Therefore all theſe things are polluted, and have in them ſome diſorder from the fall of the angels; and we may ſee *how far* the place of their kingdom extended, by the extent of thoſe things that are to be *diſſolved* and *purified*.

" 4. When the angels had, by their rebellion, loſt the divine life within themſelves, and brought their *whole outward* kingdom into darkneſs and diſorder, ſo that as *Moſes* ſpeaketh: " Darkneſs was upon the face of the deep;" that is, the whole extent of the place of this world; then in the place where they were fallen, and out of the *materials* of their ruined, angelical kingdom, did God begin the *creation* of this preſent, material, temporary, viſible world.

" 5. In

" 5. ' In the beginning, faith *Moſes*, God created the heaven and the earth.' Here, at this *inſtant*, ended the devil's power, over the place or kingdom in which he was created. As ſoon as the whole of his outward, diſordered kingdom was thus divided into a *created heaven and earth*, all was taken out of his hands, he was ſhut out of every thing, and he and all his hoſt became *poor priſoners* in their loſt kingdom, that could only *wander about* in chains of darkneſs, looking with impotent rage at the *created heaven and earth*, which was ſprung up in their own place of habitation.

" 6. Thus was this *outward kingdom*, of the whole extent of this world, taken out of the hands of *Lucifer* and his angels. All its darkneſs, diſharmony, and diſorder, was by the *creation* reſtored to a low reſemblance of its firſt ſtate, and put into that form of ſun, ſtars, fire, air, light, water, and earth, in which we now ſee it.

" 7. Into this world thus created out of the *ruins* of the kingdom of the fallen angels, was man introduced on the ſixth day of the creation, to take his place as lord and prince of it; to have power over all outward things, to diſcover and manifeſt the wonders of this new created world, and to bring forth ſuch an *holy offſpring*, as might fill up the place of the fallen angels. And when certain periods of time had produced theſe great effects, then this *whole frame* was by the laſt *purifying fire*, to have been raiſed from its paradiſaical

faical ſtate, into that *firſt heavenly* brightneſs and glory, in which it ſtood before the fall of *Lucifer*.

" 8. But the firſt man, thus created to be a prince of a new, angelical kingdom, ſtood not out his trial.

" 9. He came into this world in that *ſame glorious* body in which after the reſurrection, he ſhall *be like the angels in heaven*. For no other body, but that which was at *firſt* created ſhall riſe in Jeſus Chriſt. He only reſtores that which was loſt. The reſurrection will only take away what *ſin* and *death*, and *earth*, had added to the *firſt created* body.

" 10. In this glorious body, did the firſt man ſtand in this world, incapable of receiving any hurt, or *knowing* evil from outward nature. The *Holy Ghoſt* was the *light* that illuminated all both within and without him.

" 11. Had he fixed his will to be *eternally* what he was, had he deſired only to eat of the tree of life, to live by the word of God, he had been eſtabliſhed and confirmed an eternal angel, or divine man.

" 12. But his imagination wandered after the ſecrets of this outward world, after the knowledge of ſuch good and evil, as wrought an entire change in his nature.

" He turned from the tree of life to the forbidden fruit. And ſo he fell as deep into an *earthly life*, and the miſeries of the earth, as the devil

devil fell into a *helliſh life*, and the miſeries of hell.

" 13. And here we may ſee as in a glaſs, what it is that earthly deſires *now do* to every ſon of *Adam*. They do all that which they did to the firſt man. They carry on, keep up, and continue that *ſame* death in us which he died in paradiſe.

" 14. Thus it was, that *Adam* loſt the *light* of the Son of God, and the breath of the Holy Spirit. And this was the *immediate death* that he died in paradiſe; a death much more grievous than that which is to bring us all to our graves. It was a death that extinguiſhed all that was divine and holy in human nature, juſt as the ſin of angels turned them into devils. Now in looking at *this death*, we have the cleareſt view, of what our regeneration by the *ſecond Adam* means. For what can it be, but the reſtoration of that divine life which was loſt in *Adam* the *firſt?* For will any one ſay, that Chriſt is not in as high a degree, the *reſtorer* of our nature, as *Adam* was the *deſtroyer* of it? Now tho' this great truth, ſeated in the very heart of the Chriſtian religion, ſpeaks at once the whole nature of regeneration; yet many learned men either not ſeeing or not *loving*, or being afraid *to own* it, have been forced, not only to miſtake, but wholly to ſink the moſt glorious article of the Chriſtian faith? And inſtead of telling us the height and depth of the bleſſing of having the nature and life of Chriſt derived

derived into us, they can only teach us, what kind of word regeneration is—that it is a figurative expreſſion—and that our Saviour may be juſtified, for having made uſe of it. What learned pains do people take, to root up the belief of our having a new life in Chriſt? They run from *book* to *book*, from *language* to *language*; they conſult all criticks, ſearch all lexicons, to ſhew us, that according to the rules of true criticiſm, regeneration *need ſignify* no more than the *federal* rite of baptiſm. Nay, what is ſtill worſe, they appeal to the poor notions of the blind, infatuated Jews! They produce the opinions which they had of a regeneration talked of, and a baptiſm uſed amongſt them, when they rejected and crucified our Saviour, to teach us, what we are to underſtand by our divine birth in Chriſt Jeſus! But if this be the uſe of learning among ourſelves, we need not look at *Rome*, or the ancient Rabbies of the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, to ſee what miſerable work learning can make with the holy ſcriptures. For it is ſure the true Meſſiah it not *rightly owned*, nor the Chriſtian religion *truly known*, till the ſoul is all love, and faith, and hunger, and thirſt after this new *life*, and real formation of Jeſus Chriſt in it: till without fear of *enthuſiaſm* it ſeeks, and expects all its redemption from it. But to return.

" 15. Man, thus dead to the divine life, thus deſtitute of the Son, and *Holy Spirit*, thus fallen into an *earthly nature*, under the dominion

of

of an earthly world, which would afford him for a while a miſerable life, and then leave him to a more miſerable death; could do no more to replace himſelf in paradiſe, or to regain his firſt nature, than the devil could do to reſtore himſelf to his loſt glory.

" 16. But in this ſtate the *infinite mercy* of God met him. That love which at *firſt breathed*, a holy and divine ſoul into him, now again breathed a ſpark, or ray of divine light into him in the declaration of a *ſerpent bruiſer:* which ſpark of life ſhould in time do all that which *Adam* ſhould have done; that is, ſhould bring forth a *generation* of men, that ſhould become *Sons of God*, and take poſſeſſion of that kingdom from which the angels had fallen.

" 17. Here began the merciful myſtery of man's redemption; for this ſeed of divine life, was the Holy Jeſus, who from that time, ſtood in the place of the firſt man.

And from that time it may be ſaid in a true ſenſe that the *incarnation* of the Son of God began; becauſe he was from that time entered again into the human nature, as a ſeed of its ſalvation, tho' not made manifeſt, till he was born in the Holy Virgin *Mary*. And in this ſenſe St. *John* ſays of him, *that he was the true light which lighteth every man, that cometh into the world.* Becauſe every man has from him this light, which if it is duly attended to, is our certain guide to

Chriſt,

Chriſt, born in the fulneſs of time, and ſacrificed for us upon the croſs.

" 18. What we want from Chriſt, as our Redeemer, is manifeſt by that which he gives to us, namely a redemption from the *hell* that is in our ſouls, and from the death and corruption that is in our bodies.

" 19. We are no more created to be in the ſorrows, and anguiſh of an *earthly life*, than the angels were created to be in the *darkneſs* of hell. It is as contrary to the *will* of God towards us, that we are out of paradiſe, as it is contrary to the deſign of God towards the angels, that ſome of them are *out* of heaven, priſoners of darkneſs.

The ſickneſs, pain and corruption of our bodies, is brought upon us by ourſelves, in the ſame manner as the dark, hideous forms of the devils are brought upon them. *How abſurd, and even blaſphemous would it be, to ſay, with the ſcripture and the church, that we are by *nature*, *children of wrath*, *and born in ſin*, if we had that nature which God at firſt gave us? What a reproach upon God to ſay, that this world is a *valley of miſery*, a ſhadow of death, an habitation of *diſorders*, *ſnares*, *evils*, and *temptations*, if this was an original creation, or that ſtate of things in which God created us? Is it not as conſiſtent with the goodneſs of God, to ſpeak of the *miſery* and *diſorder* that holy angels find above, and of the vanity, emptineſs and ſorrow of the *heavenly ſtate*, as to ſpeak of the miſery

fery of *men*, and the forrows of *this world*, if man and the world were in that order, in which God at firſt had placed them?

" 20. But by the mercy of God in Chriſt, this priſon of an earthly life, is turned into a ſtate of purification. It is made a time and place of putting off our *filthy* garments, and of *ſtaying* and *ſacrificing* that man of ſin that is hid under them. And God ſuffers the ſun to ſhine upon us, and the elements to afford us nouriſhment, for no other end, but that we may all have time and opportunity to hear the call of the Son of God, to be *born again*, to be renewed by the *Holy Spirit*, and be made capable of that kingdom, from which *Lucifer* and his angels fell."

24. Look at our Saviour's ſermon on the *mount*, and indeed at all his inſtructions, and you will find them pointing at nothing elſe on our *ſide*, but a *denial* of ourſelves, and a *renunciation* of the world. And indeed how could it be otherwiſe! For if we want a Redeemer, only becauſe we have *wandered* out of paradiſe, and could not get back to it ourſelves; if we are overcome by this world, only becauſe our firſt father *ſought* after it, what wonder is it that he who is to replace us in paradiſe, ſhould call us to a *renunciation* of the world?

25. * Vain man, taken with the *ſound* of heavenly things, and *proſpects* of future glory, yet at the ſame time a *faſt friend* to the intereſts of fleſh and blood, would fain compound matters between God

God and mammon. He is very willing to acknowledge a *Saviour*, that died on the croſs to ſave him. He is ready to receive outward *ordinances* and *forms* of worſhip, and to contend with zeal for the obſervance of them. He likes heaven, and future glory on theſe conditions. He is alſo ready to put on *outward morality*, to let religion poliſh his manners, that he may have the credit and ornament of a *prudential piety*, and a *decency* of life. This does no hurt. But to lay the axe to the *whole root* of our diſeaſe, to cut all thoſe *ſilken cords* aſunder, which tie us to the world, and the world to us, to deny every temper and paſſion that cannot be made holy, wiſe and heavenly; to die to every gratification which keeps up, and ſtrengthens the folly, vanity, pride, and blindneſs of our *fallen nature*; to leave no little morſels of ſenſuality, avarice and ambition for the *old man* to feed upon, however well-covered under his mantle; this, tho' it be the very eſſence of religion, is what he flies from with as much averſion as from *hereſy* and *ſchiſm*. Here he makes learned appeals to reaſon and common ſenſe to judge betwixt him, and the goſpel; which is juſt as wiſe, as to aſk the learned *Greek*, and the worldly *Jew*, whether the *croſs* of Chriſt be not fooliſhneſs, and a juſt rock of offence: or to appeal to fleſh and blood about the narrow way to that kingdom of heaven, into which itſelf cannot poſſibly have an entrance.

26. * To

26. * To ſeek for any thing in religion, but a *new nature* fitted for a new world, is knowing neither it, nor ourſelves. *To be born again*, is to be fit for Paradiſe in whatever part of the univerſe we live. *Not to be born again*, is continuing where the ſin and death of *Adam* left us, whatever church, or ſect of religion we have fellowſhip with. All ways and opinions, all forms and modes of worſhip, ſtand on the outſide of religion. They certainly are helps to the kingdom of God, when we conſider them only as the *gate* to that *inward life*, which we want. But this is unqueſtionably true, that our *ſalvation* conſiſts wholly in our inward renewal by the Holy Ghoſt. When this begins, our ſalvation begins; as this goes on, our ſalvation goes on; when this is finiſhed, our ſalvation is finiſhed. This alone ſaves the ſoul, becauſe this alone reſtores the firſt paradiſaical, divine nature, which is the true image of God, and which alone can enter into the kingdom of heaven.

27. If we had only a *notional knowledge* that our firſt father had ſinned, and knew no more of his *ſinful condition* than hiſtory tells us of it; if we had only *inſtituted types* and *figures* to keep up the remembrance of it in our minds, we ſhould be never the worſe for his ſins. We ſhould have no hurt by *owning* ourſelves to be children of a ſinful father, if his nature, *life* and *ſpirit* were not propagated in us. So, if we have

only a *notional belief* that Jesus is become the *second Adam*, to redeem, and regenerate the fallen nature; if we know this only in the *notion* and history kept up in our minds by *outward* figures and *ordinances:* tho' we contend ever so much for this belief of a Saviour, and write *volumes* in defence of it; yet he is not our Saviour, till his nature, life and spirit, be in us. If there be any man in the world, in whom the *nature* of *Adam* is not, he has no *sin* from *Adam*. If there be any man in whom the life of Jesus is not, he has no *righteousness* from him. We must have life and righteousness in the same *truth* and *reality* in us from the second *Adam*, as we have sin and death in us from the first.

28. The whole matter is this: Christ, by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, became in the *Virgin Mary*, of the same nature with that *first man*, which was created in Paradise; who according to the *purpose* of God, was to have been the father of an holy *race* of men. But seeing the first *Adam* failed in this *design* of God, the wisdom of God provided a *second Adam*, who was born in the *same degree* of perfection, in which the first man was created. To this holy paradisaical human nature the *Son* of God was personally united. And thus Christ the second *Adam*, took the place of the first, and stands as the second father of all the sons of *Adam*. Now as we are *earthly*, corrupt, and *worldly* men, by having the *nature* and *life* of the first *Adam* propagated

gated in us, ſo we muſt become *holy* and heavenly men, by having the life and nature of the ſecond *Adam* derived into us; or as the ſcripture ſpeaks, by being *born again*. Jeſus Chriſt therefore helps us by a *ſecond* birth, to ſuch an *holy*, and *undefiled* nature, as he himſelf received in the *bleſſed Virgin*, and which we ſhould have received in *Paradiſe* from our *firſt father*.

Thus by faith in Chriſt we put *on Chriſt*, he is formed in us; we eat his *fleſh* and drink *his blood*, and have his *nature* and *life* in us.

Thus we are real members, living branches, and new born children of God.

29. * Look now at *yourſelves*, at the *world*, at *religion*, in this true light, and ſurely you muſt ſee the deſirable nature of every virtue, and every degree of it, which the goſpel ſets before you. Surely you muſt awake into a ſtrong abhorrence of every thing that the fall has brought upon you; whether it be in your *ſouls*, your *bodies*, or the ſtate of the world into which you are fallen. To renounce the poor intereſts of a worldly life, to be content with a *pilgrim's fare* in it, to live looking and longing after that which you have loſt; to have no more of covetouſneſs, of pride, of vanity and ambition, than *John* the Baptiſt had; to live unto God in your *ſhops*, your *employments* and eſtates, with ſuch thoughts and deſires of going to your heavenly Father, as the loſt ſon had when he ſaw his poor condition, eating *huſks* among *ſwine*, is only a

proof that you are, like him, come to yourſelves, that you begin to ſee *what*, and how, and where you are. Surely you can need no exhortations to run to your Redeemer, to beſeech him to do every thing in you and for you that your corrupted heart, and polluted body are in need of. He now ſtands as near you, as full of love to you, as he did to *Lazarus* when he raiſed him from the dead. He is no farther from your call than he was from the call of blind *Bartimæus*.

30. * Surely it ſhould be as needleſs to exhort you to look earneſtly after every means of recovering your firſt glorious ſtate, as to exhort the blind to receive their ſight, the ſick to accept of health, or the captive to ſuffer his chains to be taken off. For when you ſee your *miſery* and your *redemption*, both of them ſo exceeding great, you ſee *ſomething* that muſt needs penetrate the depth of your ſoul, that leaves you no room to *doubt* about the nature of any virtue; no liberty to indulge *one vain* paſſion, or to think it any hardſhip that the goſpel calls you to be *perfect*. For in this light every virtue of the goſpel ſtands recommended to us, as *health*, *purity* and *ſight* ſtand recommended to a *ſick*, *noiſome*, *blind leper*, who was ſhut up in a place that continually increaſed all his evils.

* It ſtrips us of nothing, but the *uncleanneſs* of leproſies, the *miſeries* of ſores, pains and blindneſs. It takes nothing from the world which is about

about us, but its poiſon and power of infecting us.

* So that to be called to the height of all virtue, however exceſſive it may ſeem to the *reaſonings* of fleſh and blood, is only being called away from every *miſery* and *evil* that can be avoided by us.

31. * No virtue therefore has any *blameable extreme* in it, till it *contradicts* this general end of religion, till it *hinders* the reſtoration of the divine image in us, or makes us *leſs fit* to appear amongſt the inhabitants of heaven. *Abſtinence*, *temperance*, *mortification* of the ſenſes and paſſions, can have no exceſs, till they hinder the purification of the ſoul, or make the body leſs ſubſervient to it. *Charity* can have no exceſs, till it contracts that love which we are to have in heaven, till it is more than that which would lay down its life even for an enemy, till it exceeds that which the firſt Chriſtians practiſed, when they had all things common; till it exceeds that of St. *John*, who requires him that has two coats, to give to him that has none; till it is loving our poor brethren more than Chriſt has loved us; till it goes beyond the command of loving our neighbour as we love ourſelves.

32. See now how the Doctor inſtructs his readers on thoſe two great articles, Chriſtian *temperance*, and *charity*. To remove reſtraints of the firſt kind he ſays, Our Saviour came eat-

ing and drinking, was present at weddings, and other entertainments. The Doctor may go on, and prove these indulgences to be good and pious, because what our Saviour worked a miracle to promote must needs be so. And so the adding another bottle, when friends are rejoicing, may be made a Christian duty.

But I must vindicate the life and example of our blessed Lord from the indignity done to it by the Doctor. Our blessed Lord came indeed, as he says of himself eating and drinking. But in what manner? In what sense, did he say this of himself? Why it was in distinction from *John the Baptist*, who came eating only one sort of food. And it was to shew the *Jews* their great guilt in this respect, that nothing could do them any good. For the mortification of the Baptist they condemned, as coming from the devil, and the condescension of the holy Jesus in coming to their tables, they accused as gluttony and wine-bibbing. Now the Doctor is plainly doing what our Lord accused the *Jews* of; he with them condemns the mortification of the Baptist, as coming from the devil. But he differs from the *Jews* in this that he does not condemn, but *approves* of our Lord, as a *friend* to feasts, and merry meetings.

33. Our Saviour, suitable to his gracious love, in coming into the world, sought the conversation of sinners and publicans, because he came to save that which was lost, and because he knew

knew that ſome amongſt ſuch ſinners were more moveable, than the proud ſanctity of the learned Phariſees. But may we thence conclude, that the lives of ſuch ſinners were not blameable in his ſight? Is not this as well, as to imagine he favoured the indulgence of feaſting, and good fellowſhip, becauſe he was found there? The holy Jeſus converſed more freely, ſpoke of himſelf and of the kingdom of God more divinely to a wicked woman of *Samaria* than he appears to have done to his diſciples. May we thence conclude, that he approved of a woman of that character, or thereby ſet his ſeal to the goodneſs, and lawfulneſs of her way of living? Is not this as well, as to make his preſence at a wedding an approbation of the uſual indulgences of ſuch feaſts?

34. O holy Jeſus, thou didſt nothing of thyſelf: thou ſoughteſt only the glory of thy Father, from the beginning to the end of thy life. Thou ſpenteſt whole nights in prayer in mountains and deſert places; thou hadſt not where to lay thy head. Thy common poor fare with thy diſciples was *barley bread* and *dryed fiſh*. Thy miraculous power never helped thee to any dainties or refreſhment, tho' ever ſo much fatigued. But yet becauſe this holy Jeſus came into the world to ſave all ſorts of ſinners, and to ſhew that every kind and degree of ſin could be taken away by him, therefore he came into all places, and entered into all ſorts of companies. He did

not as the Baptiſt, tie himſelf to one ſort of food. But he came eating and drinking. But why did he ſo? It was that he might reprove, and convert ſinners at their own tables. He came not to indulge himſelf, or to find ſuch gratifications as the Baptiſt abſtained from; but to work miracles, to awaken ſinners in the midſt of their indulgences.

It is ſaid, that wherever the King is, there is the court. But with much more reaſon may it be ſaid, that wherever our Saviour came, there was the temple or the church. He came to *feaſts* and *entertainments* with the ſame ſpirit, for the ſame end, and in the ſame divine power, as he went to raiſe a *dead corpſe*, namely to ſhew forth the glory of God. Wherever he came, it was in the *ſpirit* and *power* of the Redeemer of mankind; every thing he did was only to deſtroy the works of the devil, to deliver man from his power, raiſe the dead, and give ſight to the blind, and ears to the deaf. It made no difference to him, whether he did this in the temple, or in the ſtreets, at a feaſt, or at a funeral. As he was every where God, ſo every place became holy to him. Laſtly, if our Saviour, was preſent, at chearful entertainments, to ſhew his *approbation* of ſuch indulgences, how came *John the Baptiſt*, that ſevere maſter of mortification to be a fit preparer of the way to the kingdom of heaven? Surely his voice muſt cry wrong, if ſuch mortification was not right.

And if our Saviour diſapproved of the ſeverity

of

of his life and manners, how came he to point him out as a burning and ſhining light? Thus much may ſerve to vindicate our Saviour's example from the ſhocking miſapplication the Doctor has made of it.

35. Let us now ſee how he treats, and inſtructs the charitable Chriſtian in theſe words.

" What, ſays the *half-thinker*, is not charity to the poor, a moſt excellent thing? And can I be too charitable? Can I therefore beſtow too much upon the poor? I anſwer, tho' you cannot be too charitable, yet you may beſtow too much upon the poor, to the ruin of your wife and children, which is not charity, but madneſs, and a great and *moſt grievous ſin*. Did you never hear that *charity begins at home?* Did you never read that of St. *Paul? If any provide not for his own, and eſpecially thoſe of his own houſe: he hath deny'd the faith, and is worſe than an infidel?*"

The Doctor's proverb I ſhall leave to himſelf; but the text of St. *Paul*, which he has as groſly miſapplied, as he did our Saviour's miracle, I muſt take out of his hands. St. *Paul*'s words are quoted to prove, that it is madneſs, a great and grievous ſin, for any one thro' charity to the poor to render himſelf unable to provide for his wife and children. Now the apoſtle in this place ſpeaks no more about this ſin, than he ſpeaks againſt the ſin of watching and prayer. Nay, what is more, there is not in all his writings, or in the whole New Teſtament, the *leaſt ſuppoſition* or *hint* that ſuch a ſin ever was, or would be committed.

The apoſtle was ſingly ſpeaking of *ſuch women*, as were to be taken into the order of widows for the ſervice of the church, and to be maintained by it. Verſe 4. he ſays, that ſuch widows as had children or nephews that could ſupport them, were not to be maintained by the church. And to ſuch ſons and nephews who have mothers and aunts that thus want their aſſiſtance, he ſays, *If any one provide not for his own, eſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe*, i. e. If any ſons or nephews have mothers or aunts become deſolate widows, and take not care to aſſiſt them, eſpecially if they live with them, ſuch have renounced the piety of the goſpel, and have not ſo much humanity as infidels.

36. This alone is the plain doctrine of the apoſtle, which the Doctor has groſly perverted, to the condemning of that which he never thought of. On the contrary, the ſcripture abounds with paſſages which might perſuade us, that no family could ever be ruined by the alms and charity of its father; *I have been young, and now am old*, ſaith the pſalmiſt, *Yet never ſaw I the righteous forſaken or his ſeed begging their bread.*

The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat, and he that watereth ſhall be watered again. They that cannot believe this, want the faith of Chriſtians. Had any one in the apoſtle's time reduced his wife and children to want, by his great charity to the poor, the apoſtle would have been ſo far from rebuking him, as a half-thinking fool, or expoſing him

him to others, as guilty of madneſs, and grievous ſin, that he would have told them, that he had conſecrated himſelf and family to the church, that he and they were thereby become the dear objects of the church's care and love, ſince their preſent diſtreſs was brought upon them by a boundleſs love and compaſſion for the poor.

I will now put the following *caſe* in as high terms as the Doctor can well deſire. Let it be ſuppoſed that ſome good *biſhop*, poſſeſſed of as rich a *biſhoprick* as that of *Wincheſter*, ſhould through his extenſive charity for the poor throughout the whole dioceſe, be forced to uſe the utmoſt frugality in family expences, and to bring up his children in employments of labour, to help themſelves to food and raiment; one a carpenter, in which buſineſs our Saviour is ſaid to have laboured in his youth; another a maker of tents, the trade of the great apoſtle: and the reſt in the like manner. Let it be ſuppoſed, that when he died, he left only twenty pounds a year amongſt them, not to be *poſſeſſed* by any one of them, but only to be uſed by every one as ſickneſs or age made them ſtand in need of it, with this injunction, that it ſhould be given to other ſick and helpleſs people, when there was no ſuch amongſt themſelves: Let it be ſuppoſed that by his life and converſation, he had filled his wife and children with the true and perfect ſpirit of the goſpel, that they loved and rejoiced in his memory for all the good he had done to them, deſiring

nothing, but to go through the world, in the ſame *humility*, *piety*, *charity*, *love* of God, and *renunciation* of the world, as he had done. Will the Doctor ſay that this *biſhop* had *ruined* his wife and children; that *half thinking* had betrayed him into a moſt *grievous ſin*, that he had by this life *deny'd the faith*, and become *worſe* than an infidel? I will venture to ſay, that if ſuch a biſhop ſhould ever appear in this kingdom, he would bid fair to put an end to infidelity through all his dioceſe, though it were the largeſt in the nation. Now if the Doctor does not know of any one either among the *laity* or *clergy*, who is *ruining* his wife and children by a greater and more blameable charity than that of this biſhop, it muſt be ſaid, that he has been in too much haſte, that his zeal has not proceeded from *knowledge*; and that he has been throwing *cold water* upon charity, before there was any flame in it.

37. I now proceed to ſhew in a more general way the blameable nature of the Doctor's diſcourſe. The whole Chriſtian world from the time of our Saviour to this day, has been praying, *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* Sacraments, divine worſhip, and the order of the clergy, are appointed as miniſterial helps for this end, to raiſe, ſet up, and eſtabliſh this kingdom of God on earth. The fall of a man brought forth the kingdom of this world; ſin in all ſhapes is nothing elſe but the will of man, following the workings of a nature

broken

broken off from its dependency upon, and union with the divine will. All the evil and misery in the creation arises *solely* from this one cause. There is not the smallest degree of pain or punishment either within us, or without us, but is owing to this, viz. that man stands out of his place, is not *in*, and *under*, and *united* to God as he should be, as the nature of things requires. God created every thing to partake of his *own nature*, to have some share of his *own life*, and happiness. Nothing can be good or evil, happy or unhappy, but as it does or does not stand in the same *divine life* in which it was created, receiving in God, and from God, all that good that it is capable of, and so co-operating with, and under him, according to the nature of its powers and perfections. As soon as it turns to itself, and would as it were have a sound of its *own*, it breaks off from the *divine harmony*, and falls into the misery of its own *discord*; and all its workings then are only so many sorts of torments. The redemption of mankind can then only be effected, the harmony of the creation can only then be restored when the will of God is the will of every creature. For this reason our blessed Lord having taken upon him a created nature, so continually declares against the doing any thing of himself, and always appeals to the will of God, as the only motive and end of every thing he did, saying, that it was his meat and drink,

drink, to do thewill of him that had ſent him.

38. * What now can be ſo deſirable to a ſenſible man, as to have the vain, diſorderly paſſions of his heart removed from him, to be filled with ſuch unity, love, and concord, as flow from God, to ſtand united to, and co-operating with the divine goodneſs, willing nothing, but what God wills, loving nothing, but what God loves, and doing all the good he can to every creature, from the principle of love and conformity to God. Then the kingdom of God is come and his will is done in that ſoul, as it is done in heaven. Then heaven itſelf is in the ſoul, and the life and converſation of the ſoul is in heaven. From ſuch a man the curſe of the world is removed; he walks upon conſecrated ground, and every thing he meets, every thing that happens to him, helps forward his union and communion with God. For when we receive every thing from God, and do every thing for God, every thing does us the *ſame good*, and helps us to the ſame degree of happineſs. *Sickneſs*, and *health*, *proſperity* and *adverſity*, bleſs and purify ſuch a ſoul; as it turns every thing *toward God*, ſo every thing becomes *divine* to it. For he that ſeeks God in every thing, is ſure to *find* God in every thing. When we thus live wholly unto God. God is wholly ours, and we are then happy in all the happineſs of God. This is the purity and perfection, that we pray for in the Lord's prayer, that *God's kingdom may come*,

come, and *his will be done in us, as it is in heaven.*

39. And this we may be ſure is not only *neceſſary*, but *attainable* by us, or our Saviour would not have made it a part of our daily prayer. It may then juſtly be aſked, have we yet obtained that, which we have been ſo long, and ſo univerſally praying for? Can we look upon the church of this nation, as drawing *near*, or even *tending* to this ſtate of perfection? Can we be carried to any one pariſh, either in town or country where it can with truth be ſaid of any *one paſtor* and his *flock*, that there the kingdom of God is *coming* and his will *begins* to be done on earth, as it is done in heaven? Can we therefore find any *one pariſh*, where the *paſtor* has not *great* reaſon to reject the Doctor's diſcourſe, and to pray both for himſelf and his flock, that they may enter *much farther* into the ſpirit and practice of Chriſtianity, than they have yet entered, that the goſpel may have *much greater* power over them, than it hath yet had; and that they may all *ſee* what it is that has made ſo *divine*, and *powerful* a religion, ſo without its *proper effect* upon them? For if the caſe be thus, if we ſtand at this amazing diſtance from that ſtate of perfection to which Chriſt has called us, do not *heaven* and *earth* ſeem to call upon *every miniſter* of the goſpel, to take *ſome ſhare* to himſelf of this *miſerable ſtate* of things, and to endeavour to convince both *himſelf*, and his *flock*, that they have not yet been Chriſtians

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in *true earneſt*, that they have profeſſed Chriſt with the tempers of *Jews* and *Heathens*, that they have not yet enough *renounced* the world, not enough *denied* themſelves, not enough *emptied* their hearts of paſſions hurtful to piety, not enough *offered* and devoted themſelves to God, not enough made the ſpirit of religion the ſpirit of their lives, not enough ſought for ſtrength and deliverance from ſin, by a *firm* and *living faith* in Jeſus Chriſt; not enough prayed and deſired that they might be born again of God, ſo that Chriſt may be truly formed in them; not enough prayed and deſired to be every where, and on all occaſions under the perpetual influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, that they may think and ſay, and do every thing by his holy inſpiration; not enough looked to that firſt and great commandment, of loving God with our whole heart and ſtrength: not enough endeavoured to keep the next, that of loving our neighbour, as ourſelves; not enough renounced ſuch faſhions, cuſtoms, and conformities to the world, as corrupt the heart, and grieve and ſeparate the Holy Spirit from it.

40. Now which way ſoever we conſider the lamentable ſtate of religion amongſt us, no remedy can be procured by us of the *clergy*, but in this one way, that every *individual* of the order, from the higheſt to the loweſt, begin in right earneſt with himſelf, open the book of his own heart and life, and conſider ſeriouſly,

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in the prefence of God, whether, according to his degree in the eccleſiaſtical function, the world has its *due* ſhare of *ſalt* and *light* from him; whether all that is in the world, the *luſt of the fleſh*, *the luſt of the eyes*, and the *pride of life* have been ſo openly, ſo conſtantly diſcouraged, and renounced by him, that the whole form of his life has been one kind, continual call to all orders of Chriſtians, to ſet their affections on things above, to mind only the one thing needful, to have nothing at heart, but to be in Chriſt new creatures, ſeeking, intending, deſiring nothing, thro' the pilgrimage of this life, but to live *unſpotted from the world*, and to obtain every height of holineſs, and heavenly affections, which becomes thoſe who are to be called ſons, and heirs of God with Chriſt Jeſus.

41. If religion was at this time in a moſt flouriſhing ſtate amongſt us, abounding with ſuch congregations as made up the primitive church, it would be great injuſtice to ſuppoſe that the clergy had not, under God, been the chief inſtruments of building it up to ſuch a ſtate of perfection. Seeing then an univerſal corruption of manners is on all hands confeſſed, to have overſpread this Chriſtian nation, and the true ſpirit of religion is hardly any where to be ſeen, nothing can be more reaſonable than for every *clergyman*, wherever his lot is fallen, to ſuſpect himſelf to have, in ſome degree, contributed to this common calamity, and to try to diſcover

diſcover his own ſtate, by ſuch queſtions as theſe, laid *home* to his conſcience. If Chriſtianity has not done that to my flock which is the *only end* of it, is there nothing of this failure chargeable upon my conduct over it? Can my righteous Judge lay nothing to my charge on that account? Can my own heart bear me witneſs that I was not driven by *human paſſions*, but ſtayed and waited till the Holy Spirit called me to this office? Have I not undertaken the care of other ſouls, before I had any true and real care of my own? Have I not preſumed to convert and ſtrengthen others, before I was converted myſelf? To preach by hearſay of the grace, and mercy, and ſalvation of the goſpel, whilſt I myſelf was an obedient ſlave to ſin? Have I not taken upon me to lay open the myſteries of God's love in Chriſt Jeſus, before they had their *proper entrance* into my own ſoul? Have my own repentance, compunction, deep ſenſe of the burden of ſin, and want of a Saviour taught me how to make the terrors of the Lord known in the deep of every man's heart, and to awaken and pierce the conſciences of ſinners? Has, my own *true and living faith* in Chriſt my Saviour, my own experience of the atoning, cleanſing, ſanctifying powers of his precious blood, enabled me with great boldneſs to tell all ſinners, that to the *faith which worketh by love*, Chriſt always and infallibly ſaith, what he ſaid in the goſpel,

Thy

Thy ſins are forgiven; thy faith has ſaved thee; go in peace.

42. * Can my own heart, and God who is greater than our hearts, bear me witneſs that in my ſacred office I have not ſought myſelf, or my own things, but the things of Jeſus Chriſt? If I have changed one flock or ſtation for another, or added one cure to another, have I done it in *ſingleneſs of heart*, as unto the Lord and not for myſelf? Has all that I have ſought or done of this kind, been only from this motive, that I might be more faithful to him that hath called me, and be more and more ſpent and *ſacrificed* for the ſalvation of ſouls? Have I neglected no means of fitting and preparing myſelf for the illumination of God's Holy Spirit, which alone can enable me in any meaſure to ſpeak to and work upon the hearts and conſciences of men? Have I earneſtly longed, and laboured after every kind and degree of inward and outward holineſs, and purity of *body*, *ſoul*, and *ſpirit*, that my ſtanding at the altar may be acceptable to God, and my prayers and interceſſions for my flock avail much before him? Has my own ſelf-denial, renunciation of the world, and love of the croſs of Chriſt, enabled me to preach up thoſe duties in their full extent? Has my own ſtrictly pious uſe of the things of this world, my own readineſs to aſſiſt every creature to the utmoſt of my ability fitted me to call others to theſe things with power and authority? Have all ages and

and conditions of people under my care had their proper inſtruction and warning from me, ſo that I have ſpared no folly, vanity, indulgence, or conformity to the world, that hurt mens ſouls, and hinder their progreſs in piety? Have I done all that by my prayers and preaching, life and example, which Chriſt expects from thoſe whom he has enjoined to feed his ſheep? Can my flock by looking at me ſee what virtues they want? Can they by following me, be led to every kind and degree of Chriſtian perfection! Laſtly, has the will of God been the beginning and end, the reaſon and motive, the rule and meaſure, of my liking or diſliking, doing or not doing every every thing among thoſe people with whom I have lived as their miniſter?

43. Theſe are a few of ſuch queſtions as the preſent ſtate of religion in this *iſland* calls every miniſter to try himſelf by. For as the order of the clergy is inſtituted for no other end, but for the preſerving of true piety in the world; ſo when any age is more than ordinarily ſunk in vice and impiety, the *whole order* of the clergy, and *every member* of it, have great reaſon not only to be deeply afflicted, but greatly affrighted at it, and to ſuſpect their own conduct, ſince that which is their particular work, has had ſo *little* ſucceſs. They have great reaſon to apprehend, that it is ſome degeneracy of ſpirit, ſome general negligence, ſome want of example, ſome failure in doctrine, ſome defect in zeal and care

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of their particular flocks, that *too much* contributes to ſo *general a corruption* of manners. This does not ſuppoſe, that it is in the power of our order to regulate the manners of people as we pleaſe; it only ſuppoſes, that of all human means it has the *greateſt effect*, and that when any nation or people are *very bad*, it behoves the clergy, who have any *right ſenſe* of the nature of our order, any *true love* for our brethren of it, to awaken and ſtir up one another to a faithful diligence in our callings; not ſuch as may ſecure us from public ſcandal, and the laws of the land, but ſuch diligence as the nature of our office, the ſpirit of the goſpel, and the preſent decay of religion call for. Let us beſeech one another, deeply to conſider the great need that this poor nation hath of a *zealous*, *pious*, *exemplary*, *diſintereſted* and *laborious* clergy; to conſider the dreadful judgments of God, that may juſtly be expected to fall firſt upon our own heads, if this only remedy is not procured by all of us, according to the utmoſt of our ability. It is now no time for eaſe, indulgence or worldly repoſe; all is to be renounced, all is to be ſacrificed. Our religion is founded on this doctrine.—That we are to be born again of the Holy Spirit;—that there is no ſanctification of the heart, no illumination of the mind, no knowledge of divine myſteries, no love of holy things poſſible to be had, but in and by the motion and life of this Holy Spirit in us;—that its life, motion and power

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in us, increaſe according to our faith, prayers and deſires of it.

44. * Is it not now a flat denial of all this to ſay, as do ſome, that the eſtabliſhment of the goſpel in the world, together with the aſſiſtances of *human learning*, and *languages*, has been the occaſion why the aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt is abated? For if we conſult either ſcripture or experience, muſt it not be ſaid, that *worldly peace* and *proſperity* want *as much* to be ſanctified by the Holy Spirit, as *perſecution* and *diſtreſs?* That *human learning* and *knowledge* need as *high degrees* of divine grace, as human ignorance? Is not the blindneſs and corruption of *men of letters*, as notorious as that of *unlearned* men? Does an *editor of Terence*, *Horace* or *Virgil*, receive ſuch illumination from *plays* and *poetry?* Do *cardinals* and *pluraliſts* receive ſo much *unction* from human eſtabliſhments, as to need leſs to be governed by the Holy Spirit of God? Or will we ſay, that a *critical ſtudy* of divided languages, and a religion eſtabliſhed in worldly eaſe and peace, are not only in themſelves free from danger and corruption, but have ſo much of the nature of the Holy Spirit in them, that they can be to us in *his ſtead*, and make his ſanctifying operations upon us needed in a *leſs degree?*

45. On the part of God, our *redemption* in Jeſus Chriſt, and our *ſanctification* by the Holy Ghoſt, ſtand always in the *ſame degree* of *nearneſs* and *fulneſs* to all of us. There is hardly a chapter

ter in the New Teſtament that can be underſtood, but upon the ſuppoſition of this great truth. If Chriſt is leſs formed in us than he was in the firſt ſaints of the church, if we come not to the *perfect man, to the meaſure of the ſtature* of the *fulneſs of Chriſt*, it is not becauſe Chriſt is now become only our Redeemer in an ordinary way; but it is becauſe we have not ſo counted all things but *dung*, that we might win Chriſt, as the firſt ſaints did. If the Holy Spirit does not now in *ſuch a degree* renew, quicken, move, and ſanctify our hearts, and fill us with *ſuch degrees* of divine light and love, as was done in the firſt age of the church, it is not becauſe this ſanctifying ſpirit has committed *ſome part* of his work to *human learning*, and ſo is become only our ſanctifier in a leſſer and *ordinary degree*, but it is becauſe we ourſelves have *forſaken this fountain of living waters, and hewed out broken ciſterns* for ourſelves; it is becauſe we have grieved this Holy Spirit, *reſiſted* his motions, and under an *outward profeſſion* of Chriſt have kept up that *old man, with his deeds*, which cannot be the habitation of the Holy Spirit.

* If therefore we have any true ſenſe of the nature and weight of our eccleſiaſtical calling, any deſire to do the *full work* of the miniſtry, to ſatisfy the neceſſities of our flocks; if we have any fear of being condemned as *uſeleſs* labourers in Chriſt's vineyard, it is high time to awake from

from this dream of an ordinary and extraordinary fanctification of the Holy Spirit. It ſerves only to keep us *unſanctified*, ſhut up in death, in our own corrupted nature, to keep us *learnedly* content with our ſtate, as if we were *rich* and *increaſed* in *goods*, and *had need* of *nothing*: and hinders us from knowing that we are *wretched* and *miſerable*, *and poor*, *and blind and naked*.

46. * Several of the clergy, whoſe lot is fallen in this corrupt age, may be ſuppoſed to have taken upon them the ſacred office, and to have lived in it, not enough according to the nature and ſpirit of it, merely through the *degeneracy* of the times, and from a conſideration that they are well enough, according to the religion that now paſſes in the world. And perhaps there are few, if any of the order, however eminent for good works, whoſe virtues have not receiv'd *ſome abatement* from the ſame cauſe—This therefore may be added as another reaſon why all the clergy of this land muſt in the ſpirit of martyrdom awaken the world into a faith and love of the goſpel. Now is the time that we muſt *give up* all our worldly regards, *forſake all that we have*, *that we muſt hate father and mother*, *wife and children*, *and brothers and ſiſters*, *yea and our own lives alſo*, or we cannot be faithful miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt. The ſame ſpirit which firſt planted the goſpel, is now required to *recover* and *reſtore*

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it amongſt us. We muſt break off our chains of worldly prudence, and come forth in the ſpirit and power of the goſpel: ſo live, and ſpeak, and act, whether in the pulpit or out of it, that all who ſee and hear us may be forced to confeſs that God is in us of a truth. A *miniſtry* that have not this power, that have not *full proof*, both to themſelves and others, that the Holy Spirit is thus *with them*, opening the kingdom of God in their own ſouls, and enabling them to preach it to others with ſpirit and power, are to anſwer to God for their want of it.

47. To aſk whether the aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit is to be *ordinary* or *extraordinary*, is as needleſs a diſtinction, as to aſk whether a *miniſter* of the goſpel ought to be an ordinary or extraordinary man. The operation of the holy Spirit in us ſince the fall, is a ſupernatural power, and therefore in a juſt ſenſe always extraordinary; becauſe enabling us to be and do that, which the ordinary power of fallen nature is inſufficient for. But it is more or leſs reſtored to us, as we are more or leſs fitted to receive it.

* The Chriſtian religion has not had its proper effect, till it has ſo ſet up the kingdom of God among us, that *his will is done on earth, as it is done in heaven.*

* This is the perfection that every Chriſtian is to *aſpire* after. And if they who are to be taught, are to be thus emptied of all worldly paſ-

fions, thus dead to the workings of felf-will, that the Spirit of God may be all in all in them, what manner of men ought they to be, who are to *teach*, *promote*, *advance*, and *lead* the way to this purity and perfection? At what a diſtance ought he to be from every *appearance* of pride, that is to draw others to live and practiſe the profound humility of the bleſſed Jeſus? How ought he to humble his body, and be ſteady in all kinds of ſelf-denial, who would convince his flock, that *they who ſow to the fleſh reap* deſtruction? How heavenly minded, how devoted to God, how attentive to the one thing needful, how unſpotted from the world ought he to be, who is to perſuade others that they cannot poſſibly *ſerve God and mammon?* How empty ought he to be of all *worldly* policy, all arts and methods of *ambition*, who is to fix it deep in the hearts of his hearers that *unleſs they become as little children, they cannot enter into the kingdom of God?* What open hands, and open heart ought he to have, what an extent of charity ought to be viſible in him, who is to bring his flock to this faith, that *it is more bleſſed to give than to receive?* How remarkably, undeniably plain, open, ſincere, undeſigning, and faithful ſhould he be, who is to plant, and eſtabliſh ſincerity, plainneſs, ſimplicity, truth and innocence amongſt his flock? There is ſuch a neceſſary fitneſs in theſe things, that the power of religion, muſt be much prevented, when its precepts

cepts are recommended by such as excuse themselves from the plain and open practice of them.

48. * The office of the ministry is of the highest nature; it is a trust which no language can sufficiently express: and the unfaithful discharge of it is of all conditions in life the most dreadful. To be charged with the death and blood of souls, by that God who laid down his life to redeem them, is a condemnation that will carry more of guilt and punishment in it than any other. Would you know the office of a Christian pastor, you must look at the office of Christ. Would you know what manner of spirit he ought to be of, you must look at the Spirit of Christ. For the work of the ministry is only the work of Christ committed to other hands, who are to supply his absence, to be here in his stead, to be doing the same things, and with the same spirit that he did, till the end of the world.

* Nothing is so highly honourable as to bear a part in the priesthood of Christ, and be employed in the work of the ministry. But then it should be *well considered*, that it is only honourable in the *same sense*, as it is honourable to suffer as a martyr. It is an honour that is as different from all worldly figure and distinction, as the glory of Christ upon the cross is different from the triumph of an earthly prince. When therefore we think of the *honour* and *dignity* of the pastoral function, we should be careful to remember, that it is only the honour of dying a martyr, an ho-

nour of humbling, abasing, and sacrificing ourselves with Christ, and continuing the exercise of his suffering-priesthood for the salvation of the world. The holy function is often considered only as an authoritative commission to minister in holy things. But it is much more than this. It is a call and command to act with the Spirit of Christ, to represent his purity, to continue his holiness, to bear a part of his sacrifice, and devote themselves for the good of others, as he did. A priest that has only his ordination to distinguish him, wants as much to make him a true priest, as *Judas* wanted to make him a true apostle. For tho' holiness alone gives no man a commission to exercise the pastoral office, yet all who are called to it, are as much ordained to a peculiar holiness, as to the administration of the sacraments.

49. For the sacred office is God's appointment, to continue through all ages, the spirit and power of Christ for reconciling men to God in the same manner and by the same means of holiness, sacrifice and devotion, which Christ exercised when he was upon earth. We need no other proofs of this, than this one saying of our Lord: *As my Father hath sent me, so send I you.* That is, for all the ends for which I am come into the world, for all the same ends I send you into it; to be there in my stead, to supply my absence, to carry on the work that I have begun, to act with my spirit, to continue the exercise of my love,

love, and labour, and suffering for the salvation of mankind. Now to be sent by our Lord for the same ends as he was sent into the world, is such an appointment of us to all kinds of holiness, as can never be rightly discharged, but by our devoting ourselves wholly and absolutely unto God.

Imagine that you had lived with our blessed Lord upon earth, that you had learned the dignity and divinity of his person, that you had seen the love which he bore to mankind, that you had entered into the glorious designs of his kingdom, which was to convert the inhabitants of the earth, poor creatures of flesh and blood, into sons of God and heirs of eternal glory.

Imagine that you had seen him after his resurrection, when he had redeemed the world, conquered sin, death and hell, and was about to take possession of his throne; imagine that then, you had seen him commission some of his followers to be priests and intercessors with God on earth, as he had been, to feed and nourish, and watch over his flock, as he had done, to go before them in such exemplary holiness, such love of God, such compassion for sinners, such contempt of the world, such poverty of spirit, such obedience, and resignation, as they had him for an example. Had you been present at all this, how would you then have felt these words, "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you?"

50. * What sentiments of piety, what magnificence of spirit, what exalted holiness, would you have expected of those, who were called to succeed so great a master in so great a work? Could you think they could be fit for this office, unless they had *renounced* and *sacrificed* every thing for the sake of it? Could you think that any care but that of the church of God was proper for them? Would you not own that the conversion of sinners to God, ought to have been their only labour and pains? That they were to seek for no other happiness in this world, than such as their Lord and master had done, but consider themselves as called from the common affairs, ease and pleasures of life, to be in Christ's stead towards the rest of mankind, to conduct them safely to eternal happiness? Now when we consider the apostles in this light, as being the first that were entrusted with the *care of souls* from Christ himself, we can see no degree of zeal, no height of piety, no compassion for sinners, no concern for the honour of God, no contempt of suffering, no disregard of worldly interest, no watchings or mortifications, no fervours of devotion, to which we of the clergy are not equally obliged. For the salvation of mankind is still the same glorious, and necessary work that it was in their days; is still to be carried on by the same means, and is now in the hands of the clergy as it was then in theirs. If

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it was their happineſs and glory to be faithful to him that called them, to forget the little intereſts of fleſh and blood, and have nothing at heart, but the advancement of God's kingdom, we ſhall fail both of happineſs and glory if we ſeek it any other way. If an apoſtle conſidering the weight of reconciling ſouls unto God, is forced to cry out, *Who is ſufficient for theſe things?* Shall we think any care but that which is the greateſt, will make us ſtand uncondemned before God?

51. * It is a fatal deception to imagine, that the life of a miniſter of God is ever to be a life of eaſe and worldly repoſe. For tho' the temporal ſword be not always drawn againſt them, nor they forced to flee from one city to another, yet the world, the fleſh and the devil, are never ſo difficult to be reſiſted, as in temporal proſperity; nor have the miniſters of Chriſt ever more occaſion to put on all their armour, than when the world is given up to eaſe, and peace, and plenty. Swarms of vices ſteal in upon us in theſe ſeaſons; the ſpirit and life of religion is in danger of being loſt, and the ſalvation of ſouls is made more difficult, than in the moſt perilous times. And how is ſuch a ſtate of temptation to be reſiſted, ſuch a torrent of vice to be ſuppreſſed, but by the clergy's ſhewing themſelves *viſible* and *notorious* examples of all the contrary virtues? When mankind are wallowing in debauchery, wantoning in pleaſures, and given up

to vanity and luxury in all ſhapes, it is then the duty of the faithful miniſter, by his being crucified to the world, to proclaim himſelf a meſſenger of a crucified Saviour, and to make his own ſelf-denying, mortified, and heavenly life, a plain, open, and conſtant reproof of all vain indulgences.

But to proceed, "To what a height of fanatic madneſs in doctrine as well as practice, ſays the Doctor, are ſome advanced, who ſet out at firſt with an appearance of more than ordinary ſanctity only." Is not this calling upon the clergy to beware, how they admit theſe beginnings of a more than ordinary ſanctity of life, either in themſelves, or thoſe committed to their care? Is it not plainly telling them, that they muſt ſtick *cloſely* and *ſteadily* to ſuch ſanctity of practice, as may be called *ordinary*, or elſe they will be in fanatic madneſs? Nay, it is no force put upon his words, to ſuppoſe, *a more than ordinary ſanctity in practice only*, is marked out as the genuine, natural cauſe of *fanatic madneſs*, and therefore the cauſe is equally condemned with the effect. Had he meant that his reader ſhould not have the ſame diſlike of the one, as of the other, would he not have put in a word in favour of a *more than ordinary* ſanctity of life? Would he not have ſaid, that he did not intend to *blame that*, or at leaſt not *ſo much* as the other? But not a word of this. A more than ordinary ſanctity in *practice* only, and fanatic

natic *madneſs* are conſidered as cauſe and effect, and left in the ſame ſtate of condemnation, to be equally guarded againſt, and avoided, by the reader.

52. I can't help here addreſſing myſelf with great affection to all my younger brethren of the clergy. According to the courſe of nature, you are likely to have the care of the church wholly upon your hands in a ſhort time; and therefore it is chiefly from you that the reſtoration of true piety is to be expected in this nation. I beſeech you, therefore for your own ſakes, for the goſpel's ſake, for the ſake of mankind, to devote yourſelves wholly to the love and ſervice of God. As you are yet but beginners in this great office, you have in your power to make your lives the greateſt happineſs, both to yourſelves and the whole nation. You are entered into *holy orders* in degenerate times, where trade and traffic have ſeized upon all holy things; and it will be eaſy for you without fear to ſwim along with the corrupt ſtream, and to look upon him as an enemy or enthuſiaſt, that would ſave you from being loſt in it. But think my dear brethren, think in time what remorſe you are treaſuring up for yourſelves, if you live to look back upon a looſe, negligent, worldly life, ſpent among thoſe whoſe blood will be required at your hands. Think on the other hand, how bleſſedly your employment will end, if by your voices, your lives, and labours, you put a ſtop

to the overflowings of iniquity, reſtore the ſpirit of the primitive clergy, and make all your flock bleſs and praiſe God, for having ſent you among them. * Lay this down as an infallible principle, that *an entire, abſolute renunciation* of all worldly intereſt, is the only poſſible foundation of that virtue which your ſtation requires. Without this all attempts after an exemplary piety are in vain. If you want any thing from the world by way of figure and exaltation, you ſhut the power of your Redeemer out of your own ſouls, and inſtead of converting, you corrupt the hearts of thoſe that are about you. Deteſt therefore with the utmoſt abhorrence, all deſires of making your fortunes, either by preferments or rich marriages, and let it be your only ambition to ſtand at the top of every virtue, as viſible guides and patterns to all that aſpire after the perfection of holineſs. Conſider yourſelves merely as the meſſengers of God, that are ſolely ſent into the world, to bring the world to God.

53. I don't call you from a ſober uſe of human learning, but I would fain perſuade you to think nothing worthy of your notice in books and ſtudy, but that which applies to the amendment of the heart, which makes you more holy, more divine, more heavenly, than you would be without it. You want nothing, but to have the corruption of your natural birth removed, to have the nature, life, and ſpirit of Jeſus Chriſt

Chriſt derived into you. As this is all you want, ſo let this be all that you ſeek from books, ſtudy, or men. This is the only certain way to become eminent divines, inſtructed to the kingdom of heaven. And above all, let me tell you that the book of all books is your own heart, in which are written and engraven the deepeſt leſſons of divine inſtruction. Learn therefore to be deeply attentive to the preſence of God in your heart, who is always ſpeaking, always inſtructing, always illuminating that heart that is attentive to him: and be aſſured of this, that ſo much as you have of inward attention to God, of love and adherence to his holy light and Spirit, ſo much as you have of real, unaffected humility and meekneſs; ſo much as you are dead to your own will, ſo much as you have of purity of heart; ſo much and no more, nor any further, do you ſee and know the truths of God. Theſe virtues are the only eyes, and ears and ſenſes, by which you will underſtand every thing in ſcripture, in that manner in which God would have it underſtood, both for your own good, and the good of other people.

54. It was owing to this purity of heart, and attendance upon God, that an ancient widow named *Anna*, knew him to be the true Meſſiah, whom the rulers, chief prieſts, and doctors of the law, condemned as an impoſtor. Had they, inſtead of their adherence to critical knowledge and rabbinical learning, been devoted to God

in ſuch purity of heart as ſhe was, they had known as much of the kingdom of God, as ſhe did. Place therefore all your hope, all your learned help and ſkill, in the ardent love and practice of *theſe virtues*. And then, you will be able miniſters, holy prieſts, and meſſengers of God; your cleanſed hearts, like ſo many purified mirrors, will be always penetrated, always illuminated by the rays of divine light, and you will no more need the critics, to tell you what God ſpeaks to you in the ſcriptures. But of all men in the world, the critical dealers in words and particles, know the leaſt of them, and make the vaineſt attempts to underſtand them.

Scripture conſidered as a doctrine of *life*, *faith* and *ſalvation* in Jeſus Chriſt, is a ſealed or unſealed, an open or ſhut up book to every heart, in the ſame proportion as it ſtands turned to the world, or turned to God. Nothing underſtands God, but the Spirit of God; nothing brings the Spirit of God into any mind but the renouncing all for it, the turning wholly unto it, and the depending wholly upon it. * Human learning is by no means to be rejected from religion, for it is of the ſame uſe, and affords the ſame aſſiſtance to religion, that the *alphabet*, *writing* and *printing* does. But if it is raiſed from this kind and degree of aſſiſtance, if it is conſidered as a key, or the key to the myſteries of our redemption, inſtead of opening to us the kingdom of God, it locks us up in our own darkneſs. God

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is an all ſpeaking, *all working*, *all illuminating* eſſence, poſſeſſing the depth of every creature according to its nature; and when we turn from all impediments, this divine eſſence becomes as certainly the true light of our minds here, as it will be hereafter. This is not enthuſiaſm, but the words of truth and ſoberneſs; and it is the running away from this enthuſiaſm, that has made ſo many great ſcholars as uſeleſs to the church as tinkling cymbals, and Chriſtendom a mere *Babel* of learned confuſion.

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Some ANIMADVERSIONS upon

Dr. TRAP's late REPLY.

HAD I the ſpirit of an *adverſary*, or were inclined to find entertainment for the *ſatirical reader*, it would not be eaſy for me to overlook the opportunity which Dr. *Trap*'s Reply has put into my hands; but as I don't want to leſſen any appearance of ability which the Doctor has ſhewn on this occaſion; ſo whatever *perſonally* concerns him, either as a *writer*, a *ſcholar*, a *diſputant*, a *divine*, or a *Chriſtian*, ſhall have no reflection from me; and tho' by this means, ſome ſort of readers may be leſs pleaſed, yet, the more Chriſtian reader will be glad to find, that thus I muſt leave *two thirds* of his reply untouched; and as I neither have, nor (by the grace of God) ever will have any *perſonal contention* with any man whatever, ſo all the *triumph* which the Doctor has gained over me by that flow of wrath and contempt which he has let looſe upon me, I ſhall leave him quietly to enjoy.

It would be no pleaſure to me, nor benefit to the world, to diſcover that *malignity* of *ſpirit*, that *undiſtinguiſhing head*, that *diabolical calumny*, that *ſhameful*

ſhameful ignorance, that *indecent ſufficiency*, that *unbecoming preſumption*, that *naufeous* dulneſs, that *ignorance* of *logic*, that *inſenſibility* of argument, that want of *grammar*, which he has ſo heartily laid to my charge; and if he has any readers that thank him for this, I ſhall make no attempt to leſſen their number.

As I deſire nothing for myſelf, or the reader, but good *eyes*, and a good *heart*, ſeriouſly attentive to things uſeful, and always open to the light and influence of the Holy Spirit of God, ſo I ſhall endeavour to ſay nothing but what is ſuitable to ſuch a ſtate of mind, both in myſelf and the reader.

* The thing of importance which I ſhall ſpeak to, ſhall be with regard to what I have ſaid to the clergy. The miſerable ſtate of religion, and the great corruption of manners, ſo inconteſtably apparent in this iſland, gave me a juſt occaſion to deſire all the clergy, from the higheſt to the loweſt in the order, to conſider their conduct, and ſee how free they were from the common corruption, and how juſtly every one could clear himſelf from having any ſhare in this general depravity of manners. I was not inſenſible that this was a dangerous attempt, that would expoſe me to the reſentment of not a few of my brethren: but as I wrote for no other end but to do as much good as I could to thoſe who were capable of it, ſo I had no care but how to ſpeak diſagreeable truths, in as inoffenſive a manner

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as I could; how I have ſucceeded in this, is left to the world to judge. And as it is but too apparent, that the root of all the evil, which but too much ſpreads itſelf through the whole body of the clergy, is owing to a worldly, trading ſpirit, too viſible from the top to the bottom of the order, ſo I pointed at it in the ſofteſt manner that I could, in the following words, grounded on a plain apoſtolical doctrine and practice.

St. *Paul*, I had obſerved, had ſaid, it was lawful for thoſe that preach the goſpel to live by the goſpel, and yet makes it matter of the greateſt comfort to himſelf that he had wholly abſtained from this *lawful thing*; and declares it were better for him to die than that *this* rejoicing ſhould be taken from him. He appeals to his daily and nightly working with his own hands, that ſo he might preach the goſpel *freely*, and not be chargeable to thoſe that heard him. And this he ſaid he did, not for want of authority to do otherwiſe, but that he might make himſelf an enſample unto them to follow him. Here, I ſay, "What awakening inſtructions are here given to us of the *clergy*, in a practical matter of the greateſt moment? How ought every one to be frighted at the thoughts of deſiring or ſeeking a *ſecond living*, or of rejoicing at great pay where there is but little duty, when the apoſtle's rejoicing conſiſted in this, that he had paſſed thro' all the fatigues and perils of preaching the goſpel without any pay at all? How cautious,

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nay, how fearful ought we to be, of going ſo far as the ſecular laws permit, when the apoſtle thought it more deſirable to loſe his life, than to go ſo far as the very law of the goſpel would have ſuffered him?

"It is looked upon as lawful to get ſeveral preferments, and to make a gain of the goſpel, by hiring others to do duty for us at a lower rate. It is looked upon as lawful to quit a cure of ſouls of a ſmall income, for no other reaſon, but becauſe we can get another of a greater. It is looked upon as lawful for a clergyman to take the revenues of the church, which he ſerves, to his *own uſe*, tho' he has more than a competency of his own, and much more than the apoſtle could get by his labour. It is looked upon as lawful for the clergy to live in ſtate and equipage, to buy purple and fine linen out of the revenues of the church. It is looked upon as lawful for clergymen to enrich their families, to bring up their children in the faſhionable vanities, and corrupting methods of a worldly and expenſive life, by money got by preaching the goſpel of Chriſt. But ſuppoſing all this *lawful*, what comfort might we treaſure up to ourſelves, what honour might we bring to religion, what force might we give to the goſpel, what benefit ſhould we do to our neighbour, if we wholly abſtained from all theſe lawful things? Not by working day and night with our own hands, as the great apoſtle did, but by limiting

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our wants and desires to the plain demands of nature, and a religious self-denial."

Now, there are but two possible ways of justly replying to this; first, either by shewing that these observations are falsely drawn from the apostle's doctrine and practice, that I have mistaken the spirit of St. *Paul*, and the genius of the gospel, that I am doing what the apostle would not do, was he here in person, and representing such things as corruptions, which the apostle would be glad to see flourishing in the church of Christ: Or, secondly, that though these things are condemnable from the apostle's doctrine and practice, yet they are not chargeable upon the temper and practice of the clergy of this land. But, though not a word to the purpose could possibly be said, unless by one of these two ways, yet the Doctor shuts his eyes to both of them, and then pronounces sentence upon me, "That a Quaker or Infidel could not well have reflected with more virulency upon the clergy of our church, than I have done in these expressions."

Must I then suppose, that the Doctor in his sermons never mentions any failings that concern his auditors? If he does, I desire to know, how he clears himself from virulently reflecting upon them? The Quakers and Infidels are ready enough, and able enough to shew, that most congregations of Christians are sadly fallen from the religion of the gospel. But does the Doctor

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forbear this charge, is he aſhamed to call his flock to a more Chriſtian life, or afraid to remind them of their departure from the goſpel, leſt he ſhould ſeem to join with Quakers and Infidels? Or, how can the Doctor be thought to have any *true love*, or *juſt eſteem* for thoſe Chriſtians, whom he is ſo often reminding of the corruption of their manners, ſo contrary to the religion of Jeſus Chriſt? Now, if the Doctor knows how to untie this knot, and to extricate himſelf from the charge of virulent reflecting upon his pariſhoners, as Quakers and Infidels do, then he has diſſolved his charge againſt me into a mere nothing.

* If it was a thing required of me, I know no more how to raiſe in myſelf the leaſt ſpark of ill-will towards the clergy, as ſuch, than I know how to work myſelf up into a hatred of the light of the ſun. It is as natural to me, to wiſh them all their perfection, as to wiſh peace and happineſs to myſelf here and hereafter; and when I point at any failings in their conduct, it is only with ſuch a ſpirit as I would pluck a brother out of the fire.

In that part of my anſwer, which is addreſſed to the younger clergy, I ſaid, " Lay this down for an infallible principle; that an entire, abſolute renunciation of all worldly intereſt, is the only poſſible foundation of that exalted virtue, which your ſtation requires; without this, all attempts after an exemplary piety are vain: *(and then, by way of limitation and explication of this,*

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it thus immediately follows:) If you want any thing from the world by way of *figure* and *exaltation*, you ſhut the power of your Redeemer out of your own ſouls, and inſtead of converting, you corrupt the hearts of thoſe that are about you. Deteſt therefore, with the *utmoſt abhorrence*, all deſires of making your fortunes, either by *preferments*, or *rich marriages*, and let it be your only ambition, to ſtand at the top of every virtue, as viſible guides and patterns to all that aſpire after the perfection of holineſs," *p.* 61.

Now, one would imagine there was no part of the Chriſtian world, however corrupted, where this doctrine would not be admitted at leaſt in theory; or, that the goſpel of Chriſt ſhould be thought to be reproached, where ſuch advice as this was given to young divines: and yet it is of this very advice, that Dr. *Trap* ſays, "he *hopes they* will have more *grace* and ſenſe *than to follow it:* that it is *falſe doctrine, tending to the reproach and ſcandal of the Chriſtian religion*," p. 87.

Is it then come to this, that unleſs young divines chuſe to ſerve mammon as well as God, their profeſſion is a renouncing of grace and ſenſe, and a reproach to religion? And muſt they that pretend to act in Chriſt's name, as ſucceſſors in his office, take care that they renounce not the politics of the kingdom of this world? For my part, I thought it as conſiſtent with the honour of the goſpel, to give this advice, to ſuppreſs

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all worldly views, as to reſiſt the temptations of the devil.

Had *Martin Luther*, when he gave his reaſons for withdrawing from the *Pope*, been able to have added this; that the advice here given, had been formally condemned by the *Pope* in a great council, the defenders of that church would have found it as hard to have made ſuch a decree conſiſtent with the goſpel, as the ſelling of indulgencies: and it may well be ſuppoſed, that no Proteſtant writer, when ſetting forth the marks of antichriſt, in that church, would have forgot to have made this condemnation to be one of them.

For who can ſhew it to be ſo contrary to the whole ſpirit of the goſpel, to call in the *aſſiſtance* of the ſaints, or to deny the cup to the laity, who can ſhew this to put ſo entire a ſtop to ſalvation by the goſpel, as to condemn this *advice* to young divines, as a reproach to Chriſtianity? For all the ends of the goſpel may be purſued, and men may ariſe out of the corruption of their nature, notwithſtanding theſe two miſtakes: but to condemn it as an error inconſiſtent with grace and ſenſe, a reproach to Chriſtianity, for young divines to renounce worldly views, and devote themſelves wholly to God, is ſtriking at the whole root of all holineſs, and a denial of the whole ſpirit of the goſpel.

Our church requires all its candidates for holy orders, to make profeſſion of their being moved

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and called by the Holy Ghoſt to enter into the ſervice of the church: this, I ſhould think, is proof enough, that the ſpirit of this world ought not to be alive in them, when they make this profeſſion; and yet, if any young perſons ſhould come to be ordained, thus dead to all worldly views, thus wholly devoted to God, they ought according to the Doctor, to be rejected by the biſhop, as being led by a ſpirit that has loſt all *grace* and *ſenſe*, and is a *reproach* to the Chriſtian religion.

It is needleſs to quote particular texts of ſcripture, teaching the ſame that I have here taught; the whole nature of our redemption is a ſtanding proof of the ſame thing; for we want to be redeemed for no other reaſon, but becauſe we are born children of this world, and have by nature only the life, ſpirit and temper of this world, in us: this is our fall, our curſe, our ſeparation from God; and therefore we can have no redemption, but by a renunciation of all the workings of the life of this world in us, by a total dying to, and denying ourſelves; becauſe all that we are, as to our ſtate, ſpirit and life in this world, is a life that carries us from God, a life that ſhould not have been in us; 'tis a life begun by the fall, a life of ſin and corruption, which cannot enter into heaven. Indeed the life that we have in this world, from *Adam*, is not to be *naturally* deſtroyed, nor are the neceſſaries and conveniences of life to be rejected,

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nor is any one to renounce his ſhare in the employments that are uſeful to ſocial life: the renunciation of this world reaches no farther than the renouncing the ſpirit, and inclinations of it. We may ſtand in our ſtations, when we ſtand in them as the ſervants of God, as citizens of the new *Jeruſalem*, who have amongſt earthly things, our converſation in heaven: we may keep our poſſeſſions, when we poſſeſs them as the things of God, and uſe them not as nature, but as the Spirit directs us; when we do thus, we have the poverty of ſpirit, which the goſpel requires, and come up to the ſenſe of that command given to the young man, *to ſell all that he had, and give to the poor.*

But now, if our natural life is a corrupt, beſtial, diabolical life brought forth by the fall, if we want to be born again of the Holy Spirit, becauſe our natural birth is according to the ſpirit of this world; if nothing of the beaſt, or the devil, no kind or degree of envy, pride and vanity can enter into the kingdom of God, then it is plain, that all religion which leaves this nature unrenounced, which lets pride, wrath, and vanity ſubſiſt in us, which brings us to our graves in the ſame nature in which we were born, is not the religion that can ſave us. If this nature in all its moſt ſecret workings is not renounced, it matters not what we are, or what we have been doing, it ſignifies little in what chair we have ſat, whether in *Italy*, or *England*, how long we have been

been preachers, how many hereticks and ſchiſmaticks we have oppoſed, or how many books we have written in defence of orthodoxy; it is as vain to appeal to this, as to our having preached and *propheſied* in the name of Chriſt: for if this nature is allowed to live in us, all our good works have been governed by it, they are animated with pride, and only ſerve to gratify our own natural paſſions. When therefore the Doctor calls upon young divines to have *more grace* and *ſenſe* than to be driven from thoughts of advancing themſelves by *preferments and rich marriages*, he would do well to conſider, how little ſhort this is of calling them to break their very baptiſmal vow, of *renouncing the pomps and vanities of the world*. And if young candidates for holy orders, looking only at their baptiſmal vow, ſhould be led into this degree of ſelf-denial and detachment from the world, does the Doctor think, that the apoſtles, from whom this baptiſmal vow is deſcended, will riſe up in the day of judgment, and condemn ſuch abuſe of it? Does he think, that there are any departed ſaints that will join with him in ſaying, ſuch a ſpirit is a *reproach* to the goſpel? What more favourable diſpoſition could the adverſary of mankind wiſh to ſee, either in young or old divines, than a wanting and deſiring to have figure in the world, either by preferments or rich marriages? Would he find it difficult to enter into thoſe hearts, where the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes,

eyes and the pride of life has thus entered? Or would he look upon such as but half fitted for him, in comparison of those who entered into holy orders in a spirit of self-denial, and renunciation of the pomps and vanities of the world?

* *John* the *Baptist* was but the preparer of the way for evangelical purity of life; but does, the Doctor think that if the *Baptist* was now to come amongst us, he would look at things as the Doctor does, that he would see such perfections and such corruptions, such orthodoxy and such enthusiasm as the Doctor sees; that this *burning and shining light* would see no *generation of vipers* but where the Doctor sees them; that he would preach no where but in churches; that he would spare no clergy, nor any church, but that which is established in this island; that he would complain of the hardships of our clergy, and the suffering spirit which they are forced to practise, that he would plead for a priestly liberty of coveting preferments and rich marriages, that he would recommend the Doctor's discourse of the *folly, sin, and danger of being righteous over-much*, as the true fruits of that spirit which first preached the gospel? He that can believe this, must believe that the Baptist was come to confess the errors of his first appearance in the world.

I shall therefore proceed to tell young divines, that a total renunciation of the spirit, and inclinations of this life, is the one thing necessary

to conſecrate them to their holy office; that as ſure as the church of Chriſt is not a kingdom of this world, as ſure as Jeſus Chriſt came to deliver us from this evil world, as ſure as he requires us to be born again, and to forſake all and follow him, ſo ſure is it that no one has the call of the Holy Spirit to the miniſtry, nor the leaſt ground of hoping to be led and governed by it in his miniſtry, till he at leaſt prays, deſires, and heartily endeavours to have all that diſregard of worldly proſperity, figure, and diſtinction, which the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt, the maxims of the goſpel, and the practice of the apoſtles ſet before him. Till this renunciation of the world is made, we cannot enter into the miniſtry at its *own door*, but like thieves and robbers, climb over its walls; and then it will be no wonder if we do no more good to the church than thieves do the houſe they break open and plunder. If a young miniſter wants to act the part of a fine gentleman, to go on in the common ſpirit of the world, to cover a ſecular ſpirit with an eccleſiaſtic garb, and make his fortune in the church, he muſt be told that it is much ſafer to be a *publican* and a *ſinner*, than to be a *trader* in ſpiritual things; that he who with unſanctified hands attends at the altar, is farther from the kingdom of God, than a *publican*.

Covetouſneſs is idolatry; it is a heatheniſh, antichriſtian vice, tho' only trafficking in worldly matters; but when it takes poſſeſſion of the altar,

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and makes a trade of the myſteries of ſalvation. it has a blackneſs of vice which much exceeds that of the worldly miſer. The ſpirit of an eccleſiaſtic ſhould be the ſpirit of heaven, knowing nothing of this world, but how to eſcape its ſnares and temptations, burning in the love of God, and holding out light to all that aſpire after every perfection of the Chriſtian life.

* 'Tis too commonly thought, that when a young ſtudent has taken his degree, and ſhewn ſome ſigns of a genius for learning, he is well perpared to enter into the ſervice of the church. But alas! all the accompliſhments of human learning are but the ornaments of the *old man*, which leave the ſoul in it ſlavery to ſin, full of all the diſorders and corruptions of the fallen nature. If it were not thus, how could the errors of all churches have the greateſt ſcholars for their champions? All the learned Catholic world is amazed at the blindneſs, the perverſeneſs, the weakneſs, the ſophiſtry, the unfairneſs of *Proteſtant critics*. All the Proteſtant world is in the ſame degree of wonder at the ſame diſorders in *Catholic diſputants*. Is not this a demonſtration of the nature, power, and place of human learning? Of its great uſeleſſneſs to religion? Does not this enough ſhew, that it is the offspring of the old man, and his nature and qualities dwells in him, and is governed by him? Is not this a demonſtration, that the greateſt degrees of hiſtorical, verbal, critical knowledge are no real hinderance of

ſpiritual blindneſs? That human learning is as different from divine light as heaven is from earth; and that conſidered in itſelf, it leaves us in our ſlavery to blind and corrupt paſſions? Now nothing can deliver a man from this ſtate, but the Spirit of God derived into his ſoul, which alone can bring forth a new man created in Chriſt Jeſus. Nothing can make way for this new birth, but a total dying to all that we are by our natural birth. 'Tis only *this ſeparation* from things below, that can make us partakers of the truth and light that comes from above. Take away all ſelfiſhneſs from the Papiſt and the Proteſtant, let them be dead to the workings of the Spirit, and they will be as fully agreed about goſpel truths, as they are in the form of a ſquare or a circle. For nothing ſtands in the way of divine truth, or hinders its full entrance into us, but this ſelfiſhneſs, which adheres to every one who does not make it his firſt maxim, prayer, and endeavour to die to, and deny himſelf in all the tempers and inclinations of our fallen nature. This ſelf-denial is the continual doctrine of our Lord; it is by him made the beginning of all converſion to God, and he that cannot, or will not begin there, can make no beginning of that life, to which he is called in Chriſt Jeſus: therefore he that offers himſelf for holy orders, without this ſpirit of ſelf-denial, is a miſerable intruder; he only hardens and fixes himſelf in the corruptions of his own nature, and inſtead of becoming

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an inſtrument of ſaving others, his very office makes his own ſalvation more dangerous.

I doubt not but ſome will here charge me with pleading for poverty in the miniſtry, and with enmity to that maintenance which they have both from the law and the goſpel. But this is ſo far from being true, that I wiſh every good miniſter, whom the Spirit of God has called to this office, and governs in it, had much more of this world's goods than are needful for his own ſubſiſtence; becauſe it is certain, that ſuch a one's money would all be put into the poor's bag, and he would as gladly adminiſter to their temporal as to their ſpiritual neceſſities. I write againſt nothing but *avarice*, *pride*, and *ambition*, and the making the proviſions of the church *ſubſervient* to theſe tempers. A proviſion ariſing from the goſpel, is *conſecrated* by the goſpel, and is profaned by being touched and uſed by a worldly ſpirit. And he who turns this proviſion of the goſpel into a gratification of worldly paſſions, ſins againſt the goſpel more than he that pays his tithes with reluctance.

I can eaſily believe, there are clergy in this land, who labour in the goſpel, without having a ſufficient ſubſiſtence from it; but may not much of this evil be charged upon *pluralities*, *commendams*, and ſuch like ſpiritual trading? If the inferior clergy had their labours only undervalued by the laity, they would be in a much better condition than they are.

When it is complained by what ſhameful *qualifications*, empty *titles*, and unworthy pretences, numbers of perſons get loaded and dignified with variety of preferments; it is anſwered, that if preferments might not be thus crowded together, diſtinguiſhed abilities and eminent labours for the ſervice of religion, muſt go unrewarded.

As this anſwer is not fetched from the goſpel, or the primitive church, ſo it is as little ſupported by reaſon. For if this eminent labour is truly pious labour, what ſtate of life can ſo little want to be rewarded? How can imagination itſelf place a man more *above* the thoughts and deſires of worldly advancement? If ſuch a one is full of the ſpirit of the goſpel, if his labours have been like thoſe of an apoſtle, muſt he not like an apoſtle, be *dead* to the world? Can ſuch a one look upon his labour as a *hardſhip*, becauſe it has left him as low, and as far from the *pomp* of the world as it found him? Can he repine becauſe the goſpel has not proved a good *worldly bargain* to him? If the Spirit of God has begun, and directed all his labours, animated all his ſtudies and deſigns, can ſuch a one think it hard, that he has not by ſuch labours purchaſed to himſelf a ſhare in the ſtate and pride of life?

* If by a *great divine*, is only meant a perſon well ſkilled in *critical contention*, who can artfully defend a ſet of notions, amongſt which he happened to be born and bred, ſuch a divine, I own, may be very *impatient*, and *much cooled* in his zeal, unleſs

unleſs he finds himſelf well rewarded. But if an eminent divine is to be underſtood in a ſenſe ſuitable to the goſpel, he is that *particular perſon* that muſt needs have the greateſt contempt and diſlike of every thing, that has but the appearance of the pomp and vanity of this world in it. If therefore it was urged, that this conjunction of preferments and dignifying rewards was neceſſary to bring *ambitious ſcholars* into the church, or to keep them in it, there would be ſome ſenſe, tho' no goſpel in the pretence; but to talk of them as neceſſary to be the rewards of eminent piety and apoſtolic labour, is as abſurd, as to ſay, that thoſe who have truly put on Chriſt, who ſtand in the higheſt degree of a renewed nature, who beſt know and feel the bleſſing of a mortified, heavenly ſpirit, have leſs reaſon to be *content with food and raiment*, than thoſe who ſtand in a lower degree of the Chriſtian life; 'tis ſaying, that a *biſhop*, becauſe he has moſt of the ſpirit and office of an apoſtle, may well deſire more of the *pride* and *figure* of this world, than the lower clergy, who have leſs of the apoſtolic ſpirit and perfection in them.

To want to ſtand in ſome degree of worldly figure, is the ſtate of a *babe* in the Chriſtian life, and therefore can no way become thoſe, who are to lead others to fulneſs of ſtature in Chriſt Jeſus.

A *great divine* is but a *cant* expreſſion, unleſs it ſignifies a man *greatly advanced* in the divine life,

whoſe own experience and example is a demonſtration of the *reality* of all the graces of the goſpel. No divine has any more of the goſpel in him, than that which proves itſelf by the ſpirit, and form of his life: if therefore poverty of ſpirit, a diſregard of worldly figure, a total ſelf-denial is any part of the goſpel, an eminent divine, can have no wiſh with regard to the figure, pride and pomp of life, but to be placed out of every appearance of it: and if the higheſt in divine knowledge are not the foremoſt in poverty of ſpirit, and the outward humility of Chriſt and his apoſtles; if they deſire to have a dignity of worldly figure, to have reſpect by any other means than by a divine evangelical ſpirit and converſation, and are not content with all the contempt that ſuch a life can expoſe them to, they may be *great ſcholars*, but they are *little divines*, and are wanting in that which is the chief part of the miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt.

The next thing I ſaid to the young clergy, was this; "Conſider yourſelves *merely* as the meſ-"ſengers of God, that are ſent into the world *ſolely* "on his errand; and think it happineſs enough "that you are called to the ſame buſineſs for which "the Son of God was born into the world." *p.* 81.

Now, I thought what I have ſaid, was as unexceptionable, as unfit to be condemned by a profeſſor of Chriſtian theology, as if I had only recommended the loving of God with all our heart and ſoul, and mind and ſtrength; and that

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if any clergyman diſliked it, he would be forced to keep his diſlike to himſelf; but the Doctor is very open in his indignation at it; the ſame anſwer, he ſays, is to be given here, as before, *viz. that it is falſe doctrine, tending to the ſcandal and reproach* of the Chriſtian religion.

Our bleſſed Lord, when he ſent the firſt preachers of the goſpel into the world, ſaid unto them, *As my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you—go ye and teach all nations*—and *lo I am with you to the end of the world.* Now let it be ſuppoſed, that theſe firſt preachers of the goſpel fully believed, that from the time of their appointment to this high office, they *were to conſider themſelves merely as the meſſengers of God, ſent into the world ſolely on his errand*, and that *it was happineſs enough for them to be called to that buſineſs*, for which the Son of God was *born into the world*; if they had this belief, what follows? Why, according to the Doctor, that they ſet out from the very firſt in one of the greateſt errors, had miſtaken the nature and intent of their miſſion, and had gone into the world upon a principle that *was falſe* in itſelf, and *ſcandalous* and *reproachful* to the Chriſtian religion.

But if this belief is not to be condemned in the firſt clergy, I deſire to know why thoſe who claim their ſucceſſion from the firſt, and expect the preſence of Chriſt in and with their miniſtry, are not to be called upon to be of the ſame ſpirit and belief with them, or how can it be a ſcandal

to the gospel, for the modern clergy to be as wholly devoted to the service of God, as the apostles were.

The Doctor sets it out as an extraordinary presumption in *such a man* as I am, to pretend to give advice to young divines, when it is so sufficiently done already by the *offices of our church, the charges, instructions and exhortations of our bishops at their visitation, and so many excellent ordination and visitation sermons*, p. 87. Now, granting the plenty and excellency of all these, yet I have some hope, my presumption may be found to be only like that of the *poor widow*, who after so many rich oblations of great people, presumed to put her little mite into the treasury. And if it be true, that the things suggested by me, are only such as have been already set forth by so many great bishops and excellent preachers, how will the Doctor come off for condemning it, as false doctrine, scandalous, and reproachful to the Christian religion?

Dr. *Trap* gives a reason for his condemning this advice, which is thus expressed: "It is, says he, false to say, that clergymen ought to mind nothing, in any degree, but their profession and duty, as clergymen; they are husbands, parents, men, as well as clergymen, and must in some measure be concerned in the affairs of the world. p. 88."

Part of this I own to be very true, *viz.* that they are men, and have the wants of human nature

nature which muſt be ſupplied; and for proof of this, the Doctor might have appealed to St. *Paul*, who, tho' miraculouſly called to be an apoſtle, and ſeparated from the world to be merely a meſſenger and apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt; yet, after this high apoſtleſhip, worked at his trade, and often ſpent part of the day and the night in making tents: therefore, if all thoſe whom I have exhorted to conſider themſelves as ſet apart for the ſole ſervice of God, ſhould ſhew ſuch a degree of worldly care as St. *Paul* did, when he worked at his trade, they might yet juſtly be ſaid to act ſuitably to their ſtation, as the miniſters of God, that are wholly devoted to his ſervice; for who can ſay that St. *Paul* departed from his character, as a miniſter of God, when he laboured with his own hands, that he might glorioufly and freely preach the goſpel? For it was for the ſake of the goſpel, to promote and recommend the goſpel, to make his preaching the more ſucceſsful; it was to ſhew that he had fully renounced the world, and deſired nothing from it, but for the glory of God. And thus have all the miniſters of the goſpel an example in St. *Paul*, how they may make their care of a livelihood a part of their ſervice to God.

But when the Doctor ſays, that clergymen are huſbands and parents, I muſt object a little; becauſe no ſcripture or antiquity ſhews me, that theſe characters *muſt* belong to a preacher of the goſpel; and therefore, when a clergyman ex-

cuſes himſelf from any heights of the miniſterial ſervice, by ſaying, *he has married a wife* and *therefore cannot come* up to them; it ſeems to be no better an excuſe, than if he had ſaid, *he had hired a farm*, or *bought five yoke of oxen.*

I know very well, that the *reformation* has allowed prieſts and biſhops not only to look out for wives, but to have as many as they pleaſe, one after another: but this is only to be conſidered as a bare allowance, and perhaps granted upon ſuch a motive, as *Moſes* of old made one to the *Jews*, for *the hardneſs of their hearts*, tho' *from the beginning it was not ſo*; and therefore when eulogiums are ſometimes made from the pulpit on this matter, I think they had better have been ſpared; an allowance granted to weakneſs is but an indifferent ſubject to be made a matter of glory.

The Doctor ſhould alſo have obſerved, that my addreſs was made to the young clergy, and ſuch as are only upon entering into holy orders, nine in ten of whom may be ſuppoſed to be neither huſbands nor fathers. He ſhould alſo have remembered that our univerſities are full of clergy, who are obliged to live unmarried, that they may have proper leiſure and freedom to attend their ſtudies without impediment from worldly cares. And therefore, if I pointed at ſuch a dedication of the clergy to the ſervice of God, as *huſbands* and *fathers* cannot enter into, yet the matter is not blameable, becauſe here

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are ſo many that have not yet entered into this ſtate, but are at liberty to devote themſelves wholly to the ſervice of the gofpel. And therefore if to ſuch as theſe, I can ſo repreſent the weight, the duties, the heavenly nature of the prieſthood, as to prevent or extinguiſh in them all thoughts and deſires of being thus married to the world, what hurt have I done them, or the married clergy, or the gofpel of Jeſus Chriſt?

* *Celibacy*, when entered into from a principle of divine love, from a heart burning with the deſire of living wholly to God, is a ſtate that gives wings to all our endeavours, and fits the ſoul for the higheſt growth of every virtue: and if he that is conſecrated to the ſervice of the altar, feels not ſuch an aſcent of his ſoul towards heaven, as to have no wiſh, but that his *whole body*, *ſoul*, and *ſpirit*, may be preſented to God in its utmoſt degree of purity, he has his lamp much leſs kindled, than many of the laity, both men and women have had, in all ages of the church. Cuſtom has too great a power over our judgments, and reconciles us to any thing; but if a Chriſtian, who lived when Chriſtianity was in its glory, when the firſt apologiſts for it, appealed to the numbers of both ſexes, devoted to a ſingle life, as an invincible proof of the power and divinity of the gofpel; if a Chriſtian of thoſe days was now to come into the world, he would be more ſhocked at Reverend Doctors making

making love to women, than at seeing a monk in his cell, kissing a wooden crucifix.

* The knowledge and love of the virgin state began with Christianity, when the nature of our corruption, and the nature of our redemption were so fully discovered by the gospel. Then it was, that a new degree of heavenly love was kindled in the human nature, and brought forth a state of life that had not been desired, till the son of the virgin came into the world. *John* the *Baptist* was the beginner of the gospel dispensation; this *burning and shining light* was in his person, the figure of *Judaism* ending in Christianity. In his outward state he was a *Jew*, in his inward spirit and character he belonged to the gospel. He came out of the wilderness burning and shining, to preach the kingdom of heaven *at hand*. This may shew us that heat and light from above, kindled in a state of great self-denial, are neeessary to make us able ministers of the gospel; and that if we pretend to the ministry, without these qualifications, and come only burning and shining with the spirit of this world, we are as well fitted to hinder, as the Baptist was to prepare the way to the kingdom of heaven. Look at this great saint, all ye that desire to preach the gospel. He came forth in the highest degrees of mortification and chastity of life. But why did he so come? It was to shew the world that these virtues must form the spirit of every preacher of the gospel. His

character

character does not call you to a wilderneſs beyond *Jordan*, or to be cloathed with camel's hair. Such circumſtances are particular to himſelf; but it calls you to his inward ſpirit of ſelf-denial, to his death to the world, and all carnal love, if you would not only preach, but prove the perfection of the goſpel: For if the *Baptiſt* was to be thus dead to the fleſh and the world, that he might preach thus much, *the kingdom of heaven is at hand*; can leſs ſelf-denial be required of thoſe, who are to preach that which is much more, namely, that *the kingdom of heaven is come?*

* Now if this holy *Baptiſt*, when he had preached awhile upon penitence, and the kingdom of heaven *at hand*, had made an offering of his heart to ſome fine *young lady of great accompliſhments*, had not this put an end to all that was burning and ſhining in his character? And if thoſe clergy who date their miſſion from Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, ſent by him as he was by his Father, to ſtand as his repreſentatives, applying the means and myſteries of ſalvation to all that deſire to be *born again*; if they, whether they be vicars, rectors, arch-deacons, deans, or biſhops, ſhould look upon their office to be as ſacred, and their ſtation as high in the kingdom of God, as the *Baptiſt*'s was; if they ſhould look upon love addreſſes to the ſex, as unbecoming, as foreign, to their character, as to the *Baptiſt*'s, could any one ſay, that they took too much

much upon them, or paid too great a reverence to the holineſs of the prieſthood, which they derived from the very perſon and office of Jeſus Chriſt?

* Our bleſſed Lord improved upon theſe two articles of mortification and chaſtity, and ſets them before every preacher of the goſpel in a yet fuller light. It is needleſs to ſhew how much he ſpeaks of the nature and neceſſity of a total ſelf-denial; but what he ſays of the virgin life, as to be choſen by thoſe who are able to chuſe it, for the kingdom of heaven's ſake, *Matt.* xix. 12. is more than a volume of human eloquence in praiſe of it. What wonder is it, if after this, great numbers both of men and women were found in the firſt ages of the church, that choſe to know no love, but that of God in a ſingle life?

* St. *Paul* has done every thing to hinder a miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt from entering into marriage, except calling it a ſinful ſtate, when he ſays, *He that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may pleaſe his wife*; and how could he more powerfully preſs the virgin life upon the clergy, than when he ſays, *He that is unmarried, careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may pleaſe the Lord.*

* I ſhall conclude this matter with a paſſage taken from the *Serious Call to a devout and Holy Life*; it is a quotation from *Euſebius*, who lived at the time of the firſt general council, when the

the faith of our *Nicene Creed* was eſtabliſhed: his words are theſe, "There have been, ſaith he, inſtituted in the church of Chriſt, two ways or manners of living; the one raiſed above the ordinary ſtate of nature, and common ways of living, rejects wedlock, poſſeſſions, and worldly goods, and being wholly ſeparated and removed from the ordinary converſation of common life, is appropriated and devoted ſolely to the worſhip and ſervice of God, through an *exceeding degree* of *heavenly love:* they who are of this order of people, ſeem dead to the life of this world, and having their bodies only upon earth, are in their minds and contemplations dwelling in heaven; from whence, like ſo many heavenly inhabitants, they look down upon human life, making *interceſſions* and *oblations* for the whole race of mankind; and this, not with the blood of beaſts, or the fat, or ſmoak and burning of bodies, but with the higheſt exerciſes of true piety, with cleanſed and purified hearts, and with a whole form of life ſtrictly devoted to virtue: theſe are their ſacrifices, which they are continually offering unto God, and implore his mercy and favour for themſelves and their fellow-creatures. Chriſtianity receives this as the perfect manner of life.

"The other is of a lower form, and ſuiting itſelf more to the condition of human nature, admits of chaſte wedlock, the care of children and

and families, of trade and buſineſs, and goes through all the employments of life, under a ſenſe of piety and fear of God: now, they who have choſen this manner of life, have their ſet times for retirement and ſpiritual exerciſe, and particular days are ſet apart for their hearing and learning the word of God: and this order of people are conſidered as in the ſecond ſtate of piety."† Here you ſee the perfection of the Chriſtian life plainly ſet out, and how it was, what numbers of private perſons, men and women, who had no ſhare in the eccleſiaſtical office, yet, by their perfection of life, were *holy and heavenly interceſſors* for the whole race of mankind. * Now, may we not ſuppoſe, that the clergy were in this number of people that were thus heavenly in the whole form of their life, thus devoted to God and the edification of the church, by embracing the perfect life of Chriſtianity? If they were not, do they not ſtand plainly condemned, ſince *Chriſtianity held this to be the perfect manner of life?* I ſhall only add, that till ſuch a degree of heavenly love, ſuch a ſenſe of the holineſs and heavenly nature of the ſacred calling, till ſuch a deſire of perfection is awakened in the clergy, as ſhuts out all carnal love and worldly tempers from their hearts, they cannot be ſuch prieſts and interceſſors with God, ſuch patterns of holineſs, ſuch kindlers of divine love and

† Serious Call, *&c.* p. 134.

and heavenly desires amongst men, as the nature of their office both intends and requires of them.

* If a candidate for holy orders dares not make this total donation of himself to God, to be an instrument of his good pleasure only in the service of the gospel, if it is not his real state, to wish nothing in this world but the most perfect purification of his nature, if he desires any thing in and by his office, but a concurrence with Jesus Christ in the salvation of souls; if he has any reserves of self-seeking, or self-advancement in the world, and fleshly passions which he hopes to make consistent with the duties of his profession: if he is not separated in will and desire from all that is not God, and the service of God, he must be said to want the best proofs of his being called by the Holy Ghost.

But the Doctor has a *second reply*, *Whether you consider the* divinity, *or the* sense *of this*, *could* George Fox *himself have outdone it?* p. 48. This reply, considered in itself, might have its place amongst those *algebraic quantities*, that are some degrees less than nothing; but with regard to the Doctor's purpose it has something in it, for it is an appeal to that which is very powerful, which has suppressed many a good truth: it is an appeal to vulgar prejudice; and shews that the Doctor is not without his expectations from that quarter. And thus it is, that the Catholic artist in his country plays a *Martin Luther*, when he wants to reproach

proach that which he knows not how to confute. What degree of ſenſe, or divinity *George Fox* was poſſeſſed of, I cannot pretend to ſay, having never read any of his writings; but if he has ſaid any divine truths, I ſhould be as well pleaſed in ſeeing them in his books, as in any of the fathers of the primitive church. For as the goſpel requires me to be as glad to ſee piety, equity, ſtrict ſobriety, and extenſive charity in a *Jew* or a *Gentile*, as in a Chriſtian; as it obliges me to look with pleaſure upon their virtues, and be thankful to God, that ſuch perſons have ſo much of true and ſound Chriſtianity; ſo it cannot be an unchriſtian ſpirit to be as glad to ſee truths in one party of Chriſtians as in another; and to look with pleaſure upon any good doctrines that are held by any ſect of Chriſtian people, and be thankful to God, that they have ſo much of the genuine truths of the goſpel. * For if we have no complaint againſt thoſe that are divided from us, but what proceeds from a Chriſtian fear, that what they hold and practiſe will not be ſo beneficial to them, as our religion will be to us, muſt we not have the utmoſt readineſs and willingneſs to find, own, and rejoice in thoſe good doctrines and practices which they ſtill retain? If a poor pilgrim, under a neceſſity of travelling a dangerous and difficult road, had, through his own perverſeneſs loſt the uſe of a leg, and the ſight of one eye, could we be ſaid, to have any charitable concern for his perverſeneſs and misfortune, unleſs

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we were glad to see that he had one good leg, and one good eye still left, and unless we hoped and desired they might bring him at last to his journey's end? Now let every part of the church which takes itself to be sound and good, and is only angry at every other part, because they have *lessened the means* of their own salvation; let her but have thus much charity in her anger, and then she will be glad to see, in every perverse division, something like the one good leg, and the one good eye of the pilgrim, and which she will hope and wish may do them the same good.

* *Selfishness* and *partiality* are very base qualities, even in the things of this world; but in the doctrines of religion they are of a baser nature. Now this is the *greatest evil* that the division of the church has brought forth; it raises in every communion a selfish, partial orthodoxy, which consists in courageously defending all that it has, and condemning all that it has not. And thus all champions are trained up in defence of their own truth, their own learning, and their own church; and he has the most merit, who likes every thing, defends every thing among themselves, and leaves nothing uncensured in those that are of a different communion. Now how can truth, and goodness, and religion be more struck at, than by such defenders of it? If you ask why the great bishop of *Meaux* wrote so many learned books against all parts of the *reformation*, it is because he was born in *France*, and bred up in

in the boſom of *mother church*. Had he been born in *England*, had *Oxford*, or *Cambridge* been his *alma mater*, he might have rivaled our great biſhop *Stillingfleet*, and would have wrote as many learned folios againſt the church of *Rome* as he has done. And yet I will venture to ſay, that if each church could produce but one man a-piece that had the piety of an apoſtle, and the impartial love of the firſt Chriſtians, in the firſt church at *Jeruſalem*, a Proteſtant and a Papiſt of this ſtamp, would not want half a ſheet of paper to hold their articles of union, nor be half an hour before they were of one religion. If therefore it ſhould be ſaid, that churches are divided, and made unfriendly to one another, by learning, a logic, a hiſtory, a criticiſm in the hands of partiality, it would be ſaying that which every particular church too much proves to be true. Aſk why even the beſt amongſt the Catholics are very ſhy of owning the validity of the orders of our church; it is becauſe they are afraid of removing any odium from the reformation. Aſk why no Proteſtants touch upon the benefit of celibacy in thoſe who are ſeparated from worldly buſineſs to preach the goſpel, 'tis becauſe that would be ſeeming to leſſen the Roman error of not ſuffering marriage in her clergy. Aſk why even the moſt pious amongſt the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church, are afraid to aſſert, the neceſſity of ſeeking only to the guidance and inſpiration of the Holy Spirit; 'tis becauſe the

Quakers,

Quakers, who have broken off from the church, have made this doctrine their corner ſtone.

If we loved truth as ſuch; if we ſought it for its own ſake; if we loved our neighbour as ourſelves: if we deſired nothing by our religion but to be acceptable to God; if we equally deſired the ſalvation of all men; then nothing of this ſpirit could have any place in us.

* There is therefore a *Catholic* ſpirit, a *communion of ſaints* in the love of God and all goodneſs, which no one can learn from that which is called orthodoxy in particular churches. It is only to be had by a total dying to all worldly views, by a pure love of God, and by ſuch an unction from above, as delivers the mind from all ſelfiſhneſs, and makes it love truth and goodneſs with an equality of affection in every man, whether he be *Chriſtian*, *Jew*, or *Gentile*. He that would obtain this divine ſpirit in this diſordered ſtate of things, and live in a divided part of the church, without partaking of its diviſion, muſt have theſe three truths deeply fixed in his mind: *firſt*, that univerſal love, which gives the whole ſtrength of the heart to God, and makes us love every man as we love ourſelves, is the nobleſt, the moſt God-like ſtate of the ſoul, and the utmoſt perfection to which the moſt perfect religion can raiſe us; and that no religion does any man any good, but ſo far as it brings this love into him. This will ſhew us, that true orthodoxy can no where be found, but in a pure diſin-

diſintereſted love of God and our neighbour. *Secondly*, That in the preſent divided ſtate of the church, truth itſelf is torn and divided aſunder; and that therefore he is the only true Catholic, who has more of truth, and leſs of error, than is hedged in by any divided part. This truth will enable us to live in a divided part, *unhurt* by its diviſion, and keep us in a true liberty and fitneſs to be aſſiſted by all the good that we hear or ſee in any other part of the church. And thus uniting in heart and ſpirit with all that is holy and good in all churches, we enter into the true *communion of ſaints*, and become real members of the holy Catholic church, tho' we uſe the outward worſhip of only one part of it. It is thus, that the angels, as miniſtring ſpirits, aſſiſt, unite and co-operate with every thing that is holy and good, in every diviſion of mankind. *Thirdly*, he muſt always have in mind this great truth, that it is the glory of the divine juſtice to have no reſpect of parties or perſons, but to ſtand equally diſpoſed to that which is right and wrong, in *Jew* and *Gentile*. He therefore that would like as God likes, and condemn as God condemns, muſt have neither the eyes of the Papiſt nor the Proteſtant; he muſt like no truth the leſs becauſe *Ignatius Loyola* or *John Bunyan* were very zealous for it; nor have the leſs averſion to any error, becauſe Dr. *Trap* or *George Fox* had brought it forth. Now if this impartial juſtice, is the ſpirit which will judge the world at the laſt day, how can this

Spirit

ſpirit be too ſoon or too much in us? Or what can do us more hurt than that which is an hindrance of it? When I was a young ſcholar of the univerſity, I heard a great religioniſt ſay, that if he could believe the late *king of France* was in heaven, he could not wiſh to go thither himſelf. This was exceeding ſhocking: yet ſomething of this temper muſt be more or leſs in thoſe, who have, as a point of orthodoxy, worked themſelves up into a hearty contempt and hatred of thoſe that are divided from them. He that has been all his life long uſed to look with great abhorrence upon thoſe whom he called *ſuperſtitious bigots*, *dreaming viſionaries*, *falſe ſaints*, *canting enthuſiaſts*, muſt naturally expect they will be treated by God as they have been by him; and if he had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, ſuch people would find it hard to get a place in it. But it ſtands us greatly in hand to get rid of this temper before we die: ſince nothing but univerſal love can enter into the kingdom of God.

We often hear of people of great zeal and orthodoxy, declaring on their death-beds their ſtrict attachment to the church of *England*, and making ſolemn proteſtations againſt all other churches: but how much better would it be, if ſuch a perſon was to ſay, "In this divided ſtate of Chriſtendom, I muſt conform to ſome divided part of it, and therefore I live and die in communion with the church of *England*; fully

believing, that if I worſhip God in *ſpirit and in truth* in this divided part of the church, I ſhall be as acceptable to him, as if I had been a faithful member of the one whole church, before it was broken into ſeparate parts. But as I am now going out of this diſordered diviſion, into a more univerſal ſtate of things, as I am now falling into the hands of the great Creator and lover of all ſouls; as I am going to the God of all churches, to a kingdom of univerſal love, which muſt have its inhabitants from all people, nations, and languages of the earth; ſo in this ſpirit of univerſal love, I deſire to perform my laſt act of communion in this divided church, uniting in heart with all that is holy, good, and acceptable to God in all other churches; praying, from the bottom of my ſoul, that every church may have its ſaints; that God's kingdom may come, his will be done in every diviſion of Chriſtians and men, and that *every thing that hath breath may praiſe the Lord.*"

We have often ſeen learned Proteſtants very zealous in pulling to pieces the lives of the ſaints of the *Romiſh* church, and caſting all the reproach and ridicule they can, upon their wondrous ſpirit; tho' the lives of the ſaints of the primitive church may be expoſed in the ſame manner. Now, whence does this proceed? Why, from a ſecret touch of that ſpirit which could not bear to have the late king of *France* in heaven; it proceeds from a partial, ſelfiſh orthodoxy, which cannot

cannot bear to hear, or own, that the ſpirit and bleſſing of God are ſo viſible in a church from which it is divided. But if a perſon be of this ſpirit, what does it ſignify where he has his outward church? If a *Romiſh prieſt* in the north of *England* could not bear the ſplendor of a life ſo devoted to God, ſo fruitful in all good works, as was that of the lady *Elizabeth Haſtings*, if he ſhould want to ſully the brightneſs of her Chriſtian graces, and prove her to have been no ſaint, leſt it ſhould appear, that the Spirit of God was not confined to the *Romiſh* church, would not ſuch a zeal ſhew a worſe ſpirit, than that of ſuperſtition, a greater depravity of heart, than the ſaying now and then an *Ave Mary?*

* The more we know of the corruptions and hindrances of piety in the church of *Rome*, the more we ſhould rejoice, that in every age ſo many eminent ſaints, have appeared in it, whom we ſhould thankfully behold as ſo many great lights hung out by God, to ſhew the true way to heaven, as ſo many joyful proofs that Chriſt is ſtill preſent, even in that church, and that the gates of hell have not quite prevailed againſt it. Who that has the leaſt ſpark of heaven in his ſoul, can help rejoicing in this manner at the appearance of St. *Bernard*, a *Tereſa*, a *Francis* de *Sales*, in that church? Who can help praiſing God, that her invented devotions, ſuperſtitious uſe of images, and invocation of ſaints, have not ſo ſuppreſſed the graces of an evangelical life, but

that amongſt *cardinals*, *jeſuits*, *prieſts*, *friars*, *monks* and *nuns*, ſome have been found, who ſeemed to live for no other end, but to give glory to God and edification to men, and whoſe writings have every thing in them, that can guide the ſoul out of the corruption of this life into union with God? And he who through a partial orthodoxy is diverted from feeding in theſe green paſtures of life, whoſe abhorrence of jeſuitical craft, keeps him from reading the works of an *Alvares du Pas*, a *Rodrigues*, a *Pere Surin*, and ſuch like jeſuits, has a greater loſs than he can eaſily imagine: and if any clergyman can read the life of *Bartholomeus* a *Martyribus* a *Spaniſh* archbiſhop, who ſat with great influence at the very council of *Trent*, without being edified by it, and deſiring to read it again and again, I know not why he ſhould like the lives of the apoſtolical fathers: and if any Proteſtant biſhop ſhould read the *Stimulus Paſtorum* wrote by this Popiſh prelate, he muſt confeſs it to be a book, that would have done honour to the beſt archbiſhop, that the reformation has to boaſt of. O my God, how ſhall I unlock this myſtery? In the land of darkneſs, over-run with ſuperſtition, where divine worſhip ſeems to be all ſhew and ceremony, thou haſt thoſe, who are fired with the pure love of thee, who renounce every thing for thee, who are devoted wholly to thee, who think of nothing, write of nothing, deſire nothing but the honour, and praiſe, and adoration

that

that is due to thee, and who call all the world to the maxims of the gospel, the perfection of the life of Christ. But in the regions where light is sprung up, whence superstition is fled, where all that is outward in religion seems to be pruned, dressed, and put in its true order; there a cleansed shell, a whited sepulchre, seems too generally to cover a dead Christianity.

The error of all errors, and that which makes the blackest charge against the *Romish* church, is persecution, a religious sword drawn against the liberty of serving God according to our best light. Now, tho' this is the frightful monster of that church, yet, even here, who, except it be the church of *England*, can throw the first stone at her? Where must we look for a church that has so renounced this persecuting beast, as they have renounced the use of incense, the sprinklings of holy water, or extreme unction? What part of the reformation abroad has not practised and defended persecution? What sect of dissenters at home have not, in their day of power dreadfully condemned toleration?

When it shall please God to dispose the hearts of all Christian princes, entirely to destroy this anti-christian beast, and leave all their subjects in that religious freedom which they have from God; then the light of the gospel, the power of its ministers, the usefulness of its rites, the benediction of its sacraments will have proper time and place to shew themselves; and that religion

which has the moſt of a divine power in it, whoſe offices and ſervices do moſt good to the heart, whoſe miniſters are moſt devoted to God, and have the moſt proof of the preſence of Chriſt with them, will become, as it ought, the moſt univerſal. All that I have ſaid on this matter, has been occaſioned by the Doctor's appeal to vulgar prejudice; and is only to intimate, that the greateſt evil which the diviſion of the church brings forth, is a ſectarian, ſelfiſh ſpirit, which with the orthodoxy of the *old Jews*, would have God to be only their God, and themſelves only, his choſen people. If therefore we would be true Chriſtians of the Catholic church, we muſt put off this partiality of the carnal *Jew*; we muſt enter into a Catholic affection for all men, love the ſpirit of the goſpel wherever we ſee it; not work ourſelves up into an abhorrence of a *George Fox*, or an *Ignatius Loyola*; but be equally glad of the light of the goſpel wherever it ſhines, or from whatever quarter it comes; and give the ſame praiſe to God for an eminent example of piety, wherever it appears, either in Papiſt or Proteſtant.

To return. Dr. *Trap* ſuppoſing the world running into a charity that would ruin wife and family, aſks his charitable *half-thinker*, " Did you never hear that *charity begins* at home? Did you never read that of St. *Paul*, If any provide not for his own, and eſpecially thoſe of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than

than an Infidel?" The Doctor's proverb I meddled not with, but the text of St. *Paul* I rescued from his groſs miſapplication. That text has no more relation to an exceſſive charity, than to an exceſſive faſting. The apoſtle neither thought of this ſin in this place, nor in any other part of his writings; nor does he ever give the ſmalleſt hint of the danger of falling into it. The only queſtion was, whether poor widows, who had near relations, that could ſupply their wants, ſhould be maintained by the church? The apoſtle determines the matter thus; tha if ſuch perſons, who were thus able, did not thus provide for, that is, ſupply the wants of their poor kindred, they were ſo far from having the faith of Chriſtians, that they wanted a goodneſs that was to be found amongſt Infidels: this is the whole of the apoſtle's doctrine in this text. He ſpeaks of providing for thoſe of our own houſe or family, in no other ſenſe, than as it ſignifies our charity to them, when they fall into diſtreſs; but the Doctor, truſting to the ſound of the *Engliſh* word *provide*, grafts all theſe errors upon this plain text. When it is ſaid, a perſon has provided well for his family, every one ſuppoſes that he has *laid up well in ſtore*, or got an *eſtate* to be divided amongſt them for their future ſubſiſtance. From this uſe of the *Engliſh* word, *provide*; the Doctor would have it believed, that the apoſtle teaches every head of a

family to be carefully and continually laying up in ſtore for his kindred. But the apoſtle is as infinitely diſtant from this thought, as from teaching them to get their cellars filled with ſtrong liquors: when he here ſays, *provide*, he ſays only this, ſhut not your eyes to the wants of your poor kindred, but provide them with what they have need of, and don't let them fall to the charge of the church. The Doctor's ſecond error is this; according to this text, a Chriſtian ought not to hinder himſelf from thus laying up in ſtore for his family, or leave them to live by their labour and induſtry, thro' an exceſs of charity to his poor neighbours. But the apoſtle has not one ſingle ſyllable about this; and is as far from ſaying any thing like it, as from ſaying, that a Chriſtian, when he makes a feaſt, ſhould only invite his rich kindred and acquaintance. The one has as much of the apoſtle and the goſpel for it, as the other. The Doctor's third error is this; that, according to this text, he, who by a daily, continual charity, has incapacitated himſelf to lay up in ſtore, a fixed proviſion for the future maintenance of his family, is condemned by the apoſtle as *denying the faith*, and *worſe than an Infidel:* tho' the apoſtle ſpeaks no more here againſt ſuch a perſon, than he ſpeaks in the praiſe of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*.

The perſon here condemned, is not he who thro' a continual charity, is hindered from laying

ing up in ſtore ; not he, who, thro' a Chriſtian love of relieving the diſtreſſed members of Chriſt, is content with helping his own family to food and raiment; but it is that Chriſtian, who being able, is yet unwilling to ſupport his near relations, that are fallen into poverty, and leaves them to be maintained by the church: this is the only Chriſtian the apoſtle here condemns, as having put off the piety of the goſpel, and wanting even the virtue of good-natured Infidels.

I ſaid further, Had the apoſtle known a parent in his days, who, thro' his great charity for others, had reduced his own family to want of relief, he would have been ſo far from rebuking him as an half-thinking fool, or expoſing him to others, as guilty of madneſs, that he would have told them, ſuch a one had conſecrated himſelf and family to the church, as the proper objects of their care. To which the Doctor gives this anſwer, "This he affirms, and this I deny; and as he produces no other proof, ſo I give no other anſwer," p. 69. What I ſaid, has its proof from the common voice of Chriſtianity in the apoſtles days; as may ſufficiently appear from the following paſſage of St. *Clement*, fellow-labourer of the apoſtle, and biſhop of no leſs a church than that of *Rome*. "We have known many amongſt us, who have delivered themſelves into bonds and ſlavery, that they might

reſtore others to their liberty; many who have hired out themſelves ſervants unto others, that by their wages they might feed and ſuſtain them that wanted."†

Will the Doctor now ſay, that this is no proof of that which I affirmed of the apoſtle, that he would have had a love for thoſe who were become ſufferers by their own charity to others? Does not this apoſtolical biſhop make it his boaſt, and the glory of Chriſtianity; not that they had ſome, but many ſuch among them?

It was not only in the firſt church at *Jeruſalem*, that the Chriſtians had all things common. For St. *Barnabas* writing to ſome converted *Jews*, teaches them to call nothing their own in this world, becauſe they were called to the common enjoyment of the things of eternity. *Communicabis in omnibus rebus proximo tuo; nihil dices quicquam tibi proprium; ſi enim communicatis invicem, in bonis, incorruptibilibus, quanto magis in corruptibilibus.*‡

* An age after this, *Juſtin Martyr* thus glories of the power of the goſpel-faith; "We, ſays he, who before we became Chriſtians, loved our wealth and poſſeſſion above all things, now give up all property in them, that they may be in common for all that want them. *Qui pecuniarum & poſſeſſionum fructus ac proventus præ rebus*

† 1 Epiſt. ad Cor. ‡ Epiſt. Bar. No. 10.

rebus omnibus adamabamus, nunc etiam quæ habemus in commune conferimus, & cum indigentibus quibuſcunque communicamus."§ What a lean, heatheniſh figure muſt the Doctor's proverb of charity *beginning at home*, have made in the days of St. *Barnabas*, *Clement*, or *Juſtin Martyr?* Or who durſt then have made ſuch an uſe of the text of St. *Paul*, as the Doctor has done, or coupled it with ſuch a proverb? Were any of theſe firſt ſaints to judge of this matter, the Doctor might, for ought I know, have a worſe reprimand from them for ſo doing, than if he had only coupled Cardinals with Pluraliſts.

In order to ſhew the Doctor that he was very unſeaſonably preaching againſt the ſin and folly of an exceſſive charity, when yet every part of the church wanted to be ſhewn how they were fallen from the goſpel degree of it, I ſet before him an imaginary Biſhop of *Wincheſter*, yet drawn according to the model of the holy Biſhops of the firſt ages. I ſuppoſed this Biſhop ſo filled with the Spirit of Chriſt, that he looked upon all the revenues of his ſee, with no other eyes, than as our Saviour looked at that bag that was carried along with him by his diſciples, as ſo much for his own neceſſities and the neceſſities of others. I ſuppoſed that in this ſpirit, he ſo expended his yearly income,

§ 2 Apol.

that he chose to bring up his children strangers to all worldly figure, and in as low a state of labour as that to which our Lord and his apostles had been used. I supposed, that by a piety of life and conversation, equal to this exalted charity, he had instilled such an heavenly spirit into his wife and children, as made them highly thankful for their condition, and full of praise to God for the blessing of such a relation. Dr. *Trap*, tho' an antient divine, seems to start back with fright, at the sight of this apostolical bishop, and supposes, that if such a monster of a man was now to get into a bishoprick, he must needs make his children extraordinary wicked, fill them with abhorrence of his memory, and spread infidelity in the world, by making Christianity a jest to Infidels, p. 71.

I say, says the Doctor, *very clearly and plainly*, that *such a bishop must be a mad man*, p. 70. Now, if the Doctor will prove from the scriptures this bishop to be a mad man, it must be for the following reasons: *First*, because he had so mean a spirit, as to suffer the son of a bishop to work under a carpenter, as the Redeemer of mankind had done. *Secondly*, because he taught himself and his family to believe that which St. *Paul* believed, that *having food and raiment, we ought to be therewith content*. *Thirdly*, because he came up to the very letter of the great commandment, of *loving our neighbour as ourselves*. *Fourthly*,

Fourthly, becauſe he imitated the ſpirit of the firſt Chriſtians at *Jeruſalem*, who accounted nothing to be their own that they poſſeſſed. *Fifthly*, becauſe he had turned himſelf and family from all the vanity of this world, the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life. *Sixthly*, becauſe he ſeemed to have this of the apoſtle fixed in his mind, "He that ſaith, he abideth in Chriſt, ought ſo to walk, as he walked." *Seventhly*, becauſe his life was faſhioned according to this doctrine of the Holy Jeſus, "Learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly of heart: I am among you, as he that ſerveth: whoſoever will be great among you, let him be your miniſter; even as the Son of man came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter." For it may be ſaid with the greateſt certainty, that if the Doctor will have any proof from the ſcripture of the madneſs of this biſhop, it muſt be as abſurd as the reaſons here alledged.

Come we now to conſider this biſhop according to the ſpirit, practice and laws of the church in all ages. Any one verſed ever ſo little in the hiſtory of the church, muſt ſee at the firſt ſight, that this ſuppoſed biſhop is a true copy of the firſt apoſtolical fathers. And if this biſhop was to be accounted a madman, becauſe of the manner of his life, we muſt come down ſeveral ages after *Conſtantine*, to the *mitre* and triple crown, before we could find a biſhop in his ſenſes. The *Clements*, the *Polycarps*, the *Ignatius's*, the *Irenæus's*,

tus's, the *Cyprian's*, the *Baſils*, the *Ambroſe's*, and a number that have long graced our calenders, as ſaints, muſt take their place among bedlamites: for they were all of them to a tittle, the very man I have ſuppoſed at *Wincheſter*. They conſidered every penny that was brought in by the goſpel, as a proviſion for the poor, and themſelves as only entitled to their common ſhare out of it. They durſt no more raiſe any of their relations to a ſplendor of life, or give them any figure from the revenues of the church, than commit ſacrilege. They gloried as much in their own ſtrict poverty and want of worldly figure, as in their having totally renounced idols.

But we have much more than primitive example for our biſhop of *Wincheſter*: the doctrine and laws of the church have unanimouſly from age to age, to the very council of *Trent*, required every biſhop to be of the ſame ſpirit of which we have ſuppoſed him. The church, both by the doctrine of fathers, and the canons of councils, conſtantly maintains; *Firſt*, that the clergy are not proprietors, but barely ſtewards of the benefices they enjoy: having them for no other end, but for their own neceſſary, frugal ſubſiſtence, and the relief of the poor. [a] *Secondly*, that a clergyman uſing his benefice for his *own indulgence*, or the enriching his *own family*, is guilty of ſacrilege, and is a robber and murderer of the poor. [b] *Thirdly*, that if a clergyman has

[a] Nihil eccleſia niſi Fidem poſſidet.—Poſſeſſio eccleſiæ eſt Egenorum ſumptus, *Ant. Ep.* 31. [b] Si Pauperum Compau-

has a reaſonable ſubſiſtence of his own, and is not in the ſtate of the poor, then let his benefice be what it will, he has no right to uſe any part of it for himſelf, nor for his kindred, unleſs they be fit to be conſidered among thoſe poor that are to be relieved by the church. [c] *Fourthly*, that every biſhop and clergyman is to live in an humble, frugal, outward ſtate of life, ſeeking for no honour or dignity in the world, but that which ariſes from the diſtinction and luſtre of his virtues. [d] *Fifthly*, that a beneficed clergyman uſing the goods of the church for his own indulgence, or raiſing fortunes for his children, or their expenſive education, is ſacrilegious, and a robber of the poor. [e] *Sixthly*, that every clergyman is to die out of the church as poor as he entered into it. [f] *Seventhly*, that a clergyman dying, cannot leave or bequeath any thing to his children

peres ſumus, & *noſtra* ſunt, & *illorum*. Si autem privatim quæ nobis ſufficiunt, poſſidemus, non ſunt illa *noſtrum*, ſed Pauperum *Procurationem* gerimus, non Proprietatem nobis Uſurpatione damnabili vindicamus, *Auguſ. Ep.* 50 *ad Bonif.* [c] Quoniam quicquid habent Clerici, Pauperum eſt——Qui bonis Parentum & opibus ſuſtentari poſſent, ſi quod Pauperum eſt, accipiunt, *Sacrilegium profectò* committunt, & per Abuſionem Talium, Judicium ſibi manducant, & bibunt, *Hieron. Ep. ad Dammaſ.* [d] Epiſcopus vilem *Suppellectilem*, & *Menſam*, ac *Victum Pauperem*, habcat, & Dignitatis, ſua Authoritatum Fide & Vitæ meritis quærat, *Concil. Carthag.* 4. [e] Memento quod *Pauperem Vitam* Sacerdos gerere debet, & idco ſi ſuperbiam habet, ſi magno gaudet Beneficio, præter victum & veſtitum *quod ſpereſt*, Pauperibus dare non differat, quia omnia *pauperum* ſunt. *Aug. Serm.* 37. *ad Fratres.* [f] Hujus tu e vicino ſectare Veſtigia, & cæterorum, qui Virtutum illius ſimiles ſunt, quos Sacerdotium & *humiliores* facit & *pauperes*.

dren or friends, but barely that which he had independently of the church. §

* May it not therefore well be wondered what could provoke Dr. *Trap* to cenſure our biſhop as a madman, whoſe whole form of life, and uſe of his biſhoprick, is not only after the model of the firſt and greateſt ſaints that ever were biſhops, but alſo ſuch as the whole church from the beginning, both in council and out of council, from age to age, hath abſolutely required of every beneficed clergyman, who would not be condemned

Hieron. Ep. 4. *ad Ruſtic.* § Præcipimus ut in poteſtate ſua Epiſcopus Eccleſiæ Res habeat — ex iis autem quibus indiget, (ſi tamen indiget) ad ſuas neceſſitates percipiat. *Canon. Apoſ.* 40. —— eas veluti Deo contemplante diſpenſet; nec ei liceat ex iis aliquid contingere, aut Parentibus propriis (quæ dei ſunt) condonare. Quod ſi Pauperes ſunt, tanquam Pauperibus ſubminiſtret, ne eorum occaſione Eccleſiæ Res depredantur, *Can. Apoſt.* 39. Manifeſta ſint quæ pertinere videntur ad Eccleſiam cum Notitia Preſbiterorum & Diaconorum, ut ſi contigerit Epiſcopo migare de Seculo, nec *Res Eccleſiæ* depercant, nec quæ *propria* probantur Epiſcopi, ſub occaſione Rerum Eccleſiæ pervadantur: juſtum enim eſt ut ſua Epiſcopus quibus voluerit, derelinquat. & quæ Eccleſiæ ſunt, eidem conſervantur Eccleſiæ. *Concil. Antioch.* chap. 24. Quicunque Clerici, qui nihil habentes ordinantur, & *tempore Epiſcopatus*, vel *Clericatus ſui*, agros, vel quæcunque prædia nomine ſuo comparant, tanquam Rerum dominicarum *Intrinſecis-Crimini* teneantur obnoxii, niſi admoniti, Eccleſia eadem ipſa contulerint. (*N. B.*) Si autem ipſis proprie aliquid *liberalitate* alicujus, vel *Succeſſione* Cognationis obvenerit, faciant, inde quod ipſorum Propoſito congruit. Sacerdotes ipſis quoque Filiis ſuis, quibus paterna debetur Hæreditas, nihil debent derelinquere, niſi quod ſibi a Parentibus derelictum eſt: *Ergo* qui *ditior eſt* Sacerdos, quam venit ad Sacerdotium, quicquid plus habuerit, *non filiis debet dare*, ſed Pauperibus, & Sanctis fratribus, ut reddat ea quæ Domini ſunt, Domino ſuo. *Hieron. in Ezech.* chap. 46.

condemned by her, as facrilegious, and a robber of the poor? They who would fee the whole matter fet in a clear light, may read an excellent treatife of the learned *Dupin*, wrote near the end of his life, where this truth is by him afferted and inconteftably proved, *viz.* That whatever changes have been made in the nature and tenure of the goods and revenues of the church, or however they have been variouſly divided amongſt eccleſiaſticks, yet this has remained *always unchangeable and undeniable*, That a clergyman was no proprietor of his benefice; that he could only take ſo much of it to his own uſe, as was neceſſary to his ſubſiſtance, and then the remainder, be it what it would, belonged to the poor. This, ſays he, is ſtrictly maintained by the canons of councils, both before and after the diviſion of eccleſiaſtical revenues.

* But if this be the caſe, if this be an inconteſtable doctrine, ſupported by every authority that can be brought for any one doctrine of the goſpel, have we not here an utter condemnation of pluralities? Is it not an affront to the goſpel, to the plaineſt maxims of right and wrong, the whole authority of the church, to offer one ſingle word in defence of them? Logical, ſcholaſtic diſtinctions and definitions of the nature of parſons and reſidence, can ſignify no more here, where the whole nature of the thing is to be avoided, than the ſame art of words, when uſed by *Jeſuitical Caſuiſts*, can juſtify the violation of moral

moral duties. And if Dr. *Trap* was only to look at this one doctrine, he would have no reason to think it so sad a thing, to see *Pluralists* coupled with *Cardinals*. "*See*, says the learned *Dupin*, rules which will appear hard to many of the beneficed clergy, but yet, they are true, conformable to natural equity, the laws, custom, and tradition of the church, and the practice of the most holy bishops; and woe be to those that observe them not! *Malheur a Ceux qui ne les suivent pas.*" † And therefore he concludes thus, "There may be many amongst the beneficed clergy who err in this matter, thro' an ignorance of that which is required of them; therefore what I have said ought to be taken in good part, as proceeding from charity, and a sincere love of truth."

† Ibid. p. 442.

SHORT

SHORT but SUFFICIENT

CONFUTATION

Of Bp. WARBURTON's projected defence *(as he calls it)* of Chriſtianity, in his *divine legation of* Moſes, in a letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Biſhop of London.

My LORD,

THE reaſon of my preſuming to write to your lordſhip on the following ſubject is, becauſe it is a matter on which your lordſhip has employed your excellent pen, greatly to the benefit of the world.

And the reaſon of my writing at all, is owing to a book newly publiſhed † in defence of biſhop *Warburton*, in which your lordſhip, is charged with a multitude of contradictions, and inconſiſtencies relating to this point.

It is not my deſign to enter here as an aſſiſtant to your lordſhip. For this is quite needleſs.

My intention is, as mentioned in the title page. And becauſe biſhop *Warburton* has owned

† Free and candid examination of the biſhop of London's ſermons, &c.

ed this writer, as a moſt able defender of his ſcheme. I have taken occaſion to ſhew, that it is a ſcheme ſo contrary to ſcripture, and the truth of things, as no art of words, or ſtretch of genius, however powerful in paradox, can ever be able to ſupport.

The author of this book, as biſhop *Warburton* aſſures us, † is too modeſt to make his name known to the world; a quality, which from the reading of his book, one would not ſuſpect to be ſo predominate in him.—But though modeſty has forced him to conceal his name, yet he has given us ſome information of his character. He begins; "I, who am a bare looker-on, and abſolutely diſengaged from all that biaſs of affection, which is ſo wont to warp the followers of an old ſyſtem, or the inventers of a new, have done my beſt to examine this queſtion with all impartiality."‡

Had one of the antient writers of *Greece* ſaid this of himſelf, how poſitive, might a modern critic have been, from the deciſive words, a *bare looker-on*, that he had never wrote upon the ſame ſubject before? And that therefore, any book of that kind aſcribed to him, muſt infallibly be falſe and ſpurious. And yet, to the confuſion of criticiſm, this author, who unaſked, and of his own free motion, declares, that he begins this work as a bare looker-on, has for more than ten years

† Preface to critical enquiry, &c. ‡ Examination p. 2.

years before he made this declaration, been ſweating in the thickeſt duſt, and heat of Doctor *Warburton*'s moſt ardent contention for novelties †

I have the Doctor's own words for this, both for the novelties, and this gentleman's wonderful zeal, and ſkill ſhewn in the defence of them, ſo many years ago.

" Notwithſtanding, ſays the Doctor, all that can be ſaid, much clamour will ever attend novelties, though never ſo ſtrongly proved.—But truth ſeldom thrives the worſe, for unreaſonable oppoſition; and it would ſeem (N. B.) *not to be far from its eſtabliſhment*, when ſuch writers, as the following, appear in its defence.—He hath eſtabliſhed what he undertook to defend, with ſuch extent of learning, and force of good argument, that I dare become reſponſible for all he ſays; and am willing, that thoſe of my opinions here debated, may ſtand, or fall, by the ſtrength, or the invalidity of this defence."‡

This compliment, ſo very hearty, as well as elegant, puts me in mind of another, which the learned Doctor made ſome time ſince, to the whole clergy of this nation; " a body of men, ſays he, the moſt learned, virtuous, and truly Chriſtian, that ever adorned a church, or ſtate." §

Theſe

† Critical enquiry, &c. publiſhed 1746. ‡ Preface to the critical enquiry, p. 10. § D. L. Vol. 2. Pref. p. 6.

Theſe two compliments are of ſo very high a ſtrain, that were it not for the gravity of the Doctor's character, and the ſerioufneſs of the ſubject, the reader might have thought himſelf obliged to underſtand them both ironically. But if the Doctor meant no more by this, than to buy a peace with the clergy, it muſt however be ſaid, that he gave more for the purchaſe of it, than a man of a ſcrupulous conſcience would have given.

However the compliment paid to this modeſt gentleman (who to be ſure will, now never be able to let the world know his name) ſeems to have been comfortably received in ſecret, by the ample return he has made the Doctor for it, in his new book. Where, ſpeaking of a part of the Doctor's performance, he ſays, "For this anſwer, I muſt refer the reader to the *D. L.* where he will find the ſubject handled with that force, ſolidity, and preciſion of argument, which ſo eminently diſtinguiſh the author from all his cotemporaries."

I ſhall now only juſt obſerve, that the compliment made by the biſhop to the clergy, has here very much abatement made to it, by his great ally. For as matters now ſtand, if this very clergy, good, learned, and Chriſtian, beyond any thing ever heard of in the world before, ſhould one and all unite in oppoſing the biſhop, all that they could poſſibly get by their pains,

pains, would be only to ſhew, how eminently he ſtands diſtinguiſhed by force, ſolidity, and preciſion of argument from all his cotemporaries.

But no more of this. Biſhop *Warburton* grounds his ſcheme, upon the doctrine of the Old and the New Teſtament. But ſeeing he affirms that to be of the greateſt weight, which is taken from the New Teſtament, and this author alſo begins there, I ſhall do ſo likewiſe.

Firſt, I ſhall clearly evince, that there is not in all the New Teſtament, one ſingle text, which either in the letter, or the ſpirit proves, or has the leaſt tendency, or deſign to prove, that the *immortality* of the ſoul, or its perpetual duration after the death of the body, was not an *univerſal*, *commonly* received opinion in, and thro' every age of the world from *Adam* to Chriſt. *Secondly*, That this doctrine or belief of a future ſtate, was not *deſignedly ſecreted*, or *induſtriouſly hidden* from the eyes of the people of God by *Moſes*, neither by the types and figures of the law, nor by any other part of his writings. From whence I ſhall occaſionally ſhew, that the true *ground* and *method* of Chriſtian redemption to eternal life, preached by the apoſtles, began with *Adam*, was the religion of *Adam*, and all his deſcendants. And alſo, that the writings of *Moſes*, and the patriarchal faith, give the very ſame full proof of the immortality of the ſoul, or a future ſtate, as the goſpel doth.

Need

Need I not obſerve, that the whole merits of the debate, betwixt Biſhop *Warburton* on the one ſide, and the whole Chriſtian church of all ages, on the other ſide, lie wholly in theſe particulars, which, if they can be made good, the whole coſtly fabric of the Doctor's *projected defence of Chriſtianity*, (as he calls it) built at the expence of ſuch immenſe treaſures of learning, fetched from all quarters of the antient and modern world, muſt have the fate which always happens to caſtles built in the air.

This learned writer, to ſhew, that the immortality of the ſoul, or its perpetual duration in a future ſtate, was entirely unknown in all the former diſpenſations of God, until the coming of Chriſt, begins with this paſſage of St. *Paul*. "God hath ſaved us according to his own purpoſe, and his grace which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began. But is now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, thro' the goſpel."

On which words he thus proceeds: "We are told, that God, before the world began, had decreed to reſtore mankind to that loſt inheritance of eternal life, which they ſhould forfeit by the diſobedience of our firſt parents. It is added, that this ſecret purpoſe, was now at laſt made manifeſt by the appearing of Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and brought life, and immortality

mortality to light by the gospel. The apostle mentions two periods, one, when it was originally formed in the secret counsels of God, the other, when it was published and revealed. The opposition between these two states, seems necessarily to imply, that during the interval, it remained a secret. If the apostle may be allowed to be his own interpreter, it will be easy to establish this exposition by a parallel passage in the epistle to *Titus*. *In hope of eternal life*, which God, that cannot lie, promised *before the world began, but hath in due time manifested his word through preaching*. Agreeably to this, the author of the epistle to the *Hebrews*, assures us, that the *great salvation of the gospel*, that is, the *promise of eternal life, first began to be spoken by the Lord*. But how could he be the first who taught this doctrine, if *Moses* and the prophets had taught it long before? Or how did he begin to speak of that, which so many others had been commissioned to teach before? Sometimes we are told, that life and immortality are brought to light, sometimes that it was made manifest, sometimes that it first began to be spoken by Jesus Christ. The bringing to light, and making manifest, are equivalent to the beginning first to teach. And if so, the publication ascribed to Jesus Christ, must have been the first and original publication, and not merely the illustrating or giving new splendor to a doctrine, by the addition of one, or more circumstances unknown

before. However, an eminent writer (meaning your Lordſhip) aſſures us, that Jeſus Chriſt did not give the firſt notice of this doctrine. All that I need remark upon it, is, that this aſſurance ſeems directly to contradict the word of inſpiration.

Your Lordſhip has alſo ſaid, that the antient revelations *afforded a good proof of a future ſtate.* This writer makes great ſhew of triumph over this moſt true aſſertion, and is continually bringing it forth as a proof of your inconſiſtency, both with yourſelf and the apoſtles.

But to follow him farther: "St. *Paul*, ſaith he, obſerves that Jeſus Chriſt was ſent to ſhew light to the people, that is, to the *Jews* and to the *Gentiles*. It is plain from hence, that he was a light to the firſt, in the ſame ſenſe, in which he was a light to the laſt; and therefore as he was a light to the Gentiles, by revealing the myſtery of redemption, in a reſtoration to life and immortality, to them *abſolutely unknown*, it ſeems to follow, that he alſo enlightened the *Jews*, by the manifeſtation of a truth *equally unknown*. Agreeably to this account of things, *Zacharias*, in his prophecy upon the birth of *John* Baptiſt, ſays, *The day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us, to give light to them that ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.* A deſcription, which will by no means permit us to ſuppoſe, that they were enlightened with a good proof of a future ſtate. If they had been enlightened with ſuch a proof, they would have been

been in the region of life and immortality, and not in the verge and ſhadow of death. They would not have been ſitting in darkneſs, but walking in the light, if they actually ſaw the grand object in queſtion: how conſiſtent it is, to aſſign a good view of an object, to a people ſitting in darkneſs, muſt be left to the judgment of others. However, this ſeems to be the neceſſary conſequence of affirming, that the *Jews* had a good proof of a future life."

This is the glaring contradiction, which he is continually charging upon your Lordſhip throughout his whole book. Again, he attacks your Lordſhip thus, from your own words: "St. *Peter*, ſays his Lordſhip, tells all Chriſtians, that they are called out of darkneſs into a marvellous light. Aſk the evangeliſts, they will tell you, *The day ſpring from on high hath viſited us, to give light to them that ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death.* Aſk any, or all the apoſtles, and they will tell you, their commiſſion is, to open the eyes of the people, *and turn them from darkneſs unto light.* But how could the *Jewiſh* people have a *good view and proſpect* of life, and immortality, if their eyes were not opened? How could they be called out of darkneſs, if their ſituation preſented them with a good view of an object, which they were now firſt invited to behold? And how could they ſit in the ſhadow of death, if they had been favoured with a good proof of a future ſtate?

" It would be ridiculous to ſay, that they ſat in darkneſs, or that they had not their eyes, merely, becauſe they did not ſee the object in its full proportion, or extent, or had not an exact view of every minute part, and the opportunity of ſurveying it quite round. The ſitting in darkneſs and the ſhadow of death, evidently implies a total want of light, by which the people thus circumſtanced, were to be enlightened; it being impoſſible to expreſs the moſt entire ignorance in more emphatic terms."†

I have made theſe large quotations from this author, containing all his chief texts of ſcripture, and his comments upon them, in his own words, that there might be no complaint of my robbing his arguments of any of their force, for all that he farther ſays on this ſubject, is but mere repetition.

I ſhall now ſhew, that all his reaſoning upon theſe texts is falſe in itſelf, and nothing at all to the purpoſe, as not touching the one great point in queſtion, which is the doctrine or belief of a future ſtate, or the immortality of the ſoul in a life after this.—And this I ſhall do, by making it plain, that not one of theſe texts, nor any other in all the New Teſtament, proves, or has the leaſt tendency to prove, that the doctrine or belief of the ſoul's immortality, and a future ſtate, was not known in and thro' every age of the world, before the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh.

This

† Pages 4, 5, 6, &c.

This will be ſufficiently done, by ſhewing, that the doctrine of the immortality of the ſoul, or its future exiſtence in ſome kind of happineſs or miſery in another life, is a matter about which theſe texts ſay not a ſyllable, but leave it as untouched as the doctrine of the pre-exiſtence of ſouls.

If it be aſked then, What is the great diſcovery, new light and knowledge, declared in theſe texts, as newly made known to the world by the goſpel? It is anſwered, that the one thing meant both by the letter and ſpirit of all theſe, and every other the like paſſages of ſcripture, ſpeaking of that myſtery, new light, or knowledge made known by the goſpel, and unknown before, is abſolutely nothing elſe, points at nothing elſe, and has nothing elſe implied in it, but the one whole proceſs of Chriſt in his perſonality, his birth, his life, his ſufferings, his death, his reſurrection and aſcenſion into heaven. This, and this alone, namely, The whole proceſs of Chriſt, in all theſe important particulars, is the great ſalvation, the great myſtery, the hidden wiſdom of God, kept ſecret from the foundation of the world, and not manifeſted, nor poſſible to be manifeſted, but by Chriſt himſelf entering into, and going thro' all the parts of this proceſs.—Of this proceſs alone it is, that the apoſtles ſpeak, when they declare the myſtery opened in the goſpel, to have been a myſtery kept ſecret ſince the world began: and the reaſon why it was ſo is

plain, becauſe it muſt be a ſecret, and continue ſuch, till what was contained in it came into actual exiſtence, and thereby manifeſted itſelf.

Of this proceſs alone, and its wonderful effects, it is that the apoſtles ſpeak, when they glory of the aboliſhment of death, and of life and immortality brought to light through the goſpel: becauſe it is the goſpel alone, that manifeſts the actual exiſtence of this proceſs of Chriſt in all its parts. Nor do they ever ſpeak of any light, life, or knowledge, as formerly the hidden wiſdom of God, and now made manifeſt to the world, but ſolely that light, that life, and knowledge, which ariſes from ſome one or other, or all the parts of our Saviour's proceſs, as the one only poſſible and actual Redeemer of the world.

That this is, the plain full truth of the matter, that the only thing, diſcovered to the world by the light of the goſpel, is the one whole proceſs of Chriſt, muſt be acknowledged by every conſiderate man, even from the nature of the thing.—For what can the myſtery of the goſpel be, but the myſtery of Chriſt, as a Saviour, made known to the world? And what can the myſtery of Chriſt, as a Saviour made known be, but the manifeſtation of *what* he is in himſelf, in the power of his perſonality, in the efficacy of his birth, in the bleſſed conſequences of his life, his ſufferings, his death, reſurrection, and aſcenſion into heaven, as our *ſecond Adam*, or father

of

of a new, divine nature, derived into us by his wonderful proceſs in all its parts.

Now as all theſe particulars make up the *whole manifeſtation* of the myſtery opened in the goſpel, ſo there is not in any of theſe, the moſt diſtant *hint* given, that the doctrine of a *future ſtate*, was not as ſoon, as univerſally, and conſtantly known as the fall of man was. Nor do they any more imply, *ſuch ignorance*, than they imply, the fall of man not known till Chriſt came in the fleſh.—Now that which is not taught in, and by the proceſs of Chriſt, cannot be taught by the manifeſtation of the goſpel myſtery. But in all our Saviour's proceſs, there is no poſſibility of making any part of it prove, that the *immortality* of the ſoul, or its *deſtination* to a future life, was not the common belief, of every age from *Adam* to Chriſt.

For this wonderful proceſs of Chriſt, which is the whole myſtery opened in the goſpel, is about quite *another kind* of life in the ſoul, than that which conſiſts in its *bare immortality*. For immortality, conſidered in itſelf, may as well be a curſe as a bleſſing. But this is not the life and immortality that the goſpel boaſts of. It leaves ſuch natural immortality, which belongs as well to devils as men, as wholly untouched, as it does the original of the alphabet. And for this reaſon, becauſe the *one knowledge* which the former world wanted, and the Chriſtian world got, is by all the evangeliſts and apoſtles con-

fined to that, which Chriſt, as God and man, was, did, ſuffered, purchaſed, and obtained, in and through the efficacy and merits of his proceſs, till as a ſecond *Adam*, he was placed at the right hand of God.

It is the living knowledge, the real participation of all theſe parts of our Saviour's proceſs, as a God incarnate, that contains all that life and immortality, all the glad tidings of ſalvation, and light out of darkneſs, made known to the world by Chriſt and his apoſtles. Nor do they ever call the attention of mankind to any other new light or knowledge, but that of ſeeing and knowing, how every part of Chriſt's proceſs had its particular and joint efficacy, to deſtroy the works of the devil, and the power of hell in fallen man.

This was the good news of *life and immortality* brought to light by a glorious goſpel, which ſhewed the whole counſel of God towards fallen men; how they were before the foundation of the world ſeen in Chriſt, *predeſtinated to be made conformable to his image*, who by all that he was, did and ſuffered, from his firſt coming down, to his aſcenſion into heaven, was the one, only poſſible means of their partaking again of the divine nature.

Every ſtep of our Saviour's proceſs from firſt to laſt, was only ſo many neceſſary ſteps of our progreſs out of the eternal death of ſin and miſery, into a participation of an heavenly life in Chriſt Jeſus. And in this proceſs is contained all that

Chriſtian

Chriſtian theology, which makes up the whole doctrine of Chriſt and his apoſtles.

No power of reaſoning, no art of criticiſm, can force one ſingle text of the New Teſtament to ſpeak, or ſo much as hint at any other life or immortality but this, *as firſt* made known to the world by the goſpel.—The natural immortality of the ſoul, is no part of its redemption, but belongs to it as it belongs to all angels, whether in heaven or in hell, and is an immortality no more purchaſed by the incarnation of the Son of God, than the immortality which belongs to *Lucifer* and his angels.—Therefore this cannot be that immortality, which is the gift of God through Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore nothing that is ſaid of that immortality, which comes to fallen man only by Jeſus Chriſt, can be the leaſt proof, that the belief of the ſoul's perpetual exiſtence in a future ſtate came firſt, or only by him, and was not always held by every age, from the beginning of the world.

Natural immortality has its full nature in the fallen angels; but the one immortality that comes by Jeſus Chriſt, is the glory of the Holy Trinity, dwelling and manifeſting itſelf in the immortal nature of the ſoul.

For this is a certain truth, that all that is divine and God-like in any creature, dwells as a ſupernatural gift or operation of God in it; which may be loſt, as it was in angels, and *Adam*; and can be kept by no other power but that of faith:

nor regained, when loſt, but by the return of that ſame faith, and full reſignation to God. So that the natural immortality of angels or men, is only their capacity to receive the never-ending, but always increaſing manifeſtation of divine glory in, and thro' all the natural powers. And this is the one immortality made known, and purchaſed for us through the bleſſed Jeſus, being and doing what he was and did, in our poor immortal nature, that had loſt its God.

But to conſider now the texts of the New Teſtament, on which this author has endeavoured to eſtabliſh Biſhop *Warburton*'s opinion. The firſt and chief of theſe is that of St. *Paul*; "God hath ſaved us, according to his own purpoſe, and his grace, which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began: but is now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and brought life and immortality to light through the goſpel."

Now every word in this paſſage excludes all regard to the natural immortality of the ſoul, and neceſſarily leads and confines us to that one life and immortality, to a life and immortality of the heavenly nature brought forth in our ſouls.—For the life and immortality here granted to us, is expreſsly affirmed to be effected by Chriſt's aboliſhment of death. Therefore as is the death here aboliſhed, ſuch muſt be the life that is brought forth in the ſtead of it.

The

The death here abolifhed is not the natural mortality of body or foul, but that death, whofe deftruction is declared in thefe words of the apoftle, *Chrift was manifefted to deftroy the works of the devil:* and from that deftruction comes forth the one true life and immortality, which is an eternal union of righteoufnefs in and with Chrift, as a principle of a divine life eternally dwelling in us.

To be carnally minded, faith the apoftle, is death, this is the one death that Chrift is here faid to abolifh; but to be fpiritually minded is life and peace; and this is the one life and immortality that Chrift fets up in the ftead of death, by making us fpiritually minded, or as St. *Peter* words it, " partakers of the divine nature, by which we are made children of God, and if children, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chrift."

Farther, St. *John* faith, *This is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life*; furely this is the one immortality brought to light by the gofpel. But to fhew us what, and wherein this immortal, or eternal life confifts, the apoftle adds, " and this life is in his Son: he that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life."

* Therefore this immortality, or eternal life given unto us of God, not only has nothing in it concerning the natural immortality of fouls, but is neceffarily to be underftood of quite another matter.

* For they only can have this eternal life given to them of God, who have the Son: therefore it has no relation to the natural immortality of ſouls, and they can only have the Son, of whom it can be truly ſaid, "that Chriſt is of God become wiſdom and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification to them."

* As another full proof of all that has been ſaid, it may be added, that the life and immortality brought to light by the goſpel, is purely conditional and only offered to mankind, as a gift of God, upon certain terms. And therefore does not, cannot mean the immortality of the ſoul, or its perpetual natural duration in a future ſtate.

Thus, "God gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believed on him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." Therefore the immortality of life revealed by the goſpel, is purely conditional, and adventitious to the ſoul, ſuch as may be received, or not received, and conſequently cannot poſſibly be, or mean a natural immortality, for ſuch immortality, it has no power of freely receiving, or not receiving upon terms.

That bleſſing of a heavenly immortality, freely given by God, is nothing elſe but a celeſtial holineſs, purity and perfection brought forth in the ſoul, by its having the eternal WORD and SPIRIT of God again reſtored to, and united with it: called immortality, not becauſe of its eternal

eternal duration, but becauſe eternally free from all that, which is death, or the deadly evil of ſin in the ſoul; called alſo ſo, in oppoſition to that natural immortality of devils, and damned ſouls, which tho' never ceaſing, is only an eternal death. So that no argument, from what is ſaid of the life and immortality made known by the goſpel, can be drawn into a proof, that the belief of a future ſtate, was not the general belief of the world before. Becauſe the immortality preached by the goſpel, is a thing quite different from the natural, perpetual duration of the ſoul, and means neither more, nor leſs, than the *glory and perfection of a divine life*, to which *Adam* died the very day that he did eat of the forbidden tree, and which is quickened again, in and by the whole proceſs of Chriſt in our nature.

I come now, to my ſecond propoſition, namely, to ſhew, that the doctrine of a future ſtate, or the immortality of the ſoul, was not deſignedly ſecreted, or induſtriouſly hidden from the eyes of the people of God by the types and figures of the Moſaic diſpenſation.—My reaſons for it are as follow. *Firſt*, becauſe it is highly unworthy of God, to ſuppoſe, that it was, the end of thoſe types and figures, deſignedly to *ſecrete*, or *hide* from the people of God, the knowledge *of any truth*, much leſs the knowledge of a truth, abſolutely *neceſſary*, to the very poſſibility of any ſpiritual relation, or religious communi-

cation

cation between God and man, as that of the immortality of the ſoul, muſt be.—For though the Moſaic ſtate, may be juſtly called a *region of darkneſs*, when compared to that *light* which has ariſen from the proceſs of Chriſt; yet ſo far as it went, and with regard to the people under it, it was a degree of *light*, and a degree of *life:* it was *ſome progreſs* in victory over death, it was *ſome opening* of divine light, an help to ſuch kind of knowledge, as could be had in ſuch a ſtate, as was only formed to ſupport, and keep up a faith, and hope, and expectation of ſuch a redemption to come, as had been promiſed from the beginning of the world, but could have no open manifeſtation, till its *own exiſtence* manifeſted itſelf. —It is therefore a groſs miſtaking the *whole nature* of the law, to conſider its types and figures as *deſignedly* hiding any thing from man.—Their deſign was quite the contrary, namely, to convey *new* light and *farther* information. And though they may be ſaid to be a *ſhadowy*, and imperfect repreſentation, yet its whole intent is, to give ſome knowledge of the ſubſtance; and by its ſigns to make the things to come more expected, than they would have been without ſuch types and figures.

Biſhop *Warburton*, ſpeaking of typical repreſentation, ſaith, *it neceſſarily implies the throwing a thing into ſhade*, or *ſecreting* it from *vulgar knowledge*.

Typical

Typical repreſentation, in the *law*, is not, cannot be the *throwing a thing into ſhade*, or *ſecreting* it from *vulgar knowledge*. For this ſuppoſes the thing typified to have been already *in exiſtence*, or it could not be *thrown* into ſhade. But this hath no place in the Moſaic types and figures; they are not the putting any thing *already exiſtent*, under a cover, but are a *degree* of light caſt upon ſuch a matter, as had *never ſhewn* itſelf, and which could therefore only be typically pointed at, till it came into actual exiſtence.

Again, that typical repreſentation does not *neceſſarily imply*, *the throwing a thing into ſhade, and ſecreting it from vulgar knowledge*, is plain from hence.—Baptiſm, and bread and wine in the ſacrament, are merely corporeal types and figures of ſpiritual things; but if it was *neceſſarily eſſential* to typical repreſentation, *to throw things into ſhade, and ſecrete them from vulgar knowledge*, it would follow, that theſe two ſacraments could have no other end, but to caſt the ſpiritual things of the goſpel into ſhade, and ſecrete them from vulgar knowledge. Type, figure, and human language, with regard to ſpiritual things, have the ſame kind of imperfection, though not in the ſame *degree*; but yet teaching and informing, is the deſign of both of them.

Of the Moſaic types therefore it may juſtly be affirmed, that they were ſo far from *deſignedly* hiding, or covering any truths from man, that their whole intent was, to *uncover*, and make *leſs hidden*

hidden such things as at that time, could not be seen, or known as they were in themselves.—Nothing could possibly manifest the nature, power, and efficacy of Christ's process (the one thing typified) but its own real nature, come into *actual existence in all its parts*.—Therefore through every age of the world, from the first promise made to *Adam*, of *a seed of the woman to bruise the head of the serpent*, to that time, all the religious goodness of mankind consisted in their *walking before God* in an *implicit faith* of a full redemption, made known to them under representation of a seed of the woman, overcoming the mischief that the serpent had done to them. And through this *faith alone* it was, that all the holy men of old had their righteousness, and peace, and union with God. And *God was not ashamed to be called their God, inasmuch as having received the promises, and seen them afar off, and embraced them, they confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on earth, desired a heavenly country, and through faith looked for a city whose builder and maker is God.*

Hence are the following great truths undeniably evident, (1.) That *faith in Christ*, has always been, and always must be, the *only* ground of salvation possible to man, in any age of the world. (2.) That *this faith* itself, and all its power and efficacy, has always, as fully proceeded from Christ alone, as the faith of those who believed in him, when come in the flesh. For as then Christ

Chriſt truly ſaid of himſelf, *without me ye can do nothing*, ſo it was equally true of the firſt promiſed ſeed of the woman, *that without it*, nothing good could have been done by fallen man.

Therefore, (3) the covenant of God with all mankind through Chriſt, is a living, operative covenant of life and immortality, not firſt begun, or firſt made known, when Chriſt was on earth, and died for us, but a covenant as antient as our firſt parents, as univerſal as their offſpring. And what the apoſtle ſaith, that *God was in Chriſt Jeſus reconciling the world unto himſelf*, tells us a truth and goodneſs of God, that extends itſelf to every nation, people, and language, that ever hath been, or ever ſhall be upon the face of the earth.

* And as an implicit faith in a promiſed redemption was all the religion of the old world; all that could be done by the infinite wiſdom of God, was according to the fitneſs of times, ſeaſons and occaſions (only known to himſelf) to give forth ſuch typical and prophetic intimations of this redemption, as ſhould more and more confirm their faith, and prepare them to ſee, that the whole proceſs of Chriſt, when finiſhed, was that very redemption firſt promiſed to all the world, in the promiſe made to the common Father of mankind, through ſucceeding ages kept conſtantly in view, by a train of types and prophecies.

* And

* And as the hiſtory and ritual of *Moſes*, could not poſſibly deſign to take away the knowledge of any divine truths from the people of God, ſo leaſt of all could they deſignedly hide from them a belief of the natural immortality of the ſoul: a truth abſolutely neceſſary and eſſential to any ſpiritual relation, or religious communion between God and man.

* And indeed, *Moſes*, is as free from any ſuch *deſign*, as the apoſtles themſelves.

* For to ſay, that the types of the law have deſignedly hid, from the people of God, all ſenſe of the immortality of the ſoul, is as falſe, as bold and extravagant, as to ſay the ſame thing of the goſpel.

For in the New Teſtament, not a word is to be found, that expreſsly affirms the ſoul to be naturally immortal; in this reſpect the law and the goſpel are equally ſilent; and yet neither of them ſecrete, or hide it from the people of God, but both fully prove, and with the ſame kind of proof, the abſolute neceſſity of believing it.

For as in the goſpel it is never expreſsly aſſerted, and yet is fully proved, becauſe unavoidably ſuppoſed, and neceſſarily implied in and by the open, and plain doctrines of the goſpel: ſo it is with the books of *Moſes*; they never expreſsly affirm the natural immortality of the ſoul, and yet give one, and the ſame full proof of it, as the goſpel doth. Becauſe the expreſs doc-

trines

trines of every dispensation of God, from *Adam* to Christ, openly teach doctrines, which not by inference, but in the plain nature of the thing, unavoidably require, and necessarily imply, the immortality of the soul, and the common belief of it in all ages of the church before the coming of Christ.

The obtaining an union with Christ, is the one life and immortality brought to light by the gospel; but this immortality unavoidably requires, and necessarily implies the perpetual duration of the soul's natural life. For nothing but an ever-enduring creature, is capable of enjoying an everlasting gift.

Therefore the gospel, tho' never once expressly asserting, yet continually demonstrates the natural immortality of the soul.

And this is the whole truth, with regard to the *Mosaic* history and types; they hide it, in the same manner as the gospel hides it, that is, not at all; and they fully prove it in the same manner as the gospel proves it, by doctrines which necessarily require, and absolutely imply it, in the first conception of them.

For the history of the creation and the fall of man, contains an express covenant of a redemption, promised to *Adam* and his fallen posterity, in which a seed of the woman should do away the evil which the serpent had brought into the human nature, that is, should restore the first, lost, heavenly life to mankind.

But

But this covenant, and the immediate benefit of it, could neither be wanted nor received, but by immortal creatures, that believed themſelves to have an immortality, which had loſt that glory and perfection which belonged to it at the firſt. Nor could ſuch immortal creatures have any power of entering into this covenant any other way, than by an implicit faith in God. For it was a covenant of redemption, or return of their firſt glory, without the leaſt intimation of the time, or age, when, or the means, or manner how it was to be brought to paſs. Therefore ſuch a covenant, and ſuch a faith, in the very firſt conception of them, without the leaſt reaſoning or deduction, abſolutely imply, and neceſſarily require a full belief of a future ſtate.

And how could God better keep up a full ſenſe of it, or more fix it in the hearts of men, than by placing and fixing all their faith and comfort, in a redemption certainly to come upon all the world, which yet might not come, till half the world was dead?

Or how could mankind poſſibly give into this faith, had they had the leaſt doubt of the certainty of a life to come? For their faith in ſuch an expected redemption, could not be either more or leſs, than their faith in a future ſtate.

Therefore God's requiring this faith of them, was in the higheſt degree his requiring them to believe

believe the ever-enduring life of their souls. Consequently, in the first revelation of God to man, life and immortality, as it means an ever-enduring state of the soul, was as fully, and in the same degree brought to light, as in the revelation of the gospel.

In the gospel it is proved, because an immortality of a heavenly life is made known, purchased and given by Christ, which necessarily implies an immortal nature in man, or he could not partake of it.

In the first revelation, it is equally proved, because a *redemption to come*, that was to be obtained by an implicit faith, without any knowledge of the time when it was to appear, whether before or after many generations of men were dead and gone, necessarily implies a full belief of a state belonging to man, that is beyond time, and the death of the body.

This proof of the natural immortality of the soul, thus inseparable from the first revelation of God, is so strong, that nothing need, or hardly can be added to it. For how could God more fully assert the immortality of our nature, than by requiring our faith in such a redemption? Or how could man more strongly declare his full belief of, such immortality, than by his faith in a redemption that had nothing to do with time, or the life, or death of the body in this present world?

Again,

Again, The murder, or martyrdom of *Abel*, and the tranſlation of *Enoch* into heaven, both recorded for the inſtruction of the people in this very point, are two examples, and firſt fruits of the redemption promiſed to *Adam*, and all mankind; two invincible proofs, that this firſt covenant was a covenant of life and immortality, confirmed to mankind by facts ſtrong and convincing, like thoſe of Chriſt's reſurrection and aſcenſion.

For immediately after a covenant of redemption was made, the firſt good man after it, in the very beginning of the world, and the beginning of his own life, after his firſt act of divine worſhip, and as ſoon as God had declared his good pleaſure in it, was ſlaughtered like a beaſt.

Now can there be a fuller demonſtration, that the covenant of redemption was for life and immortality in a future ſtate? Otherwiſe the firſt good man in the world loſt all the benefit of God's covenant, merely becauſe he was good; merely thro' the devotion that he ſhewed towards God, and the favour which God ſhewed towards him.

Therefore either *Abel*'s blood cries aloud the abſolute certainty of a future ſtate, or *Abel* muſt be ſaid to have been undone, ruined, and deprived of all good, purely becauſe of a friendſhip diſcovered between God and him.

This

This fact therefore, recorded by the Spirit of God assures all the Mosaic generations, that another life belonged to *Abel* and to them, besides that which *Abel* lost by his death. Does it not as directly, declare this, as when Christ said, his *kingdom was not of this world?* Does it not say the same thing, as when Christ said to his disciples, *fear not them that can only kill the body?* The same thing, as the voice from heaven, which cried, *blessed are the dead which die in the Lord?*

Again, Another proof of the same force, is the translation of *Enoch*. God saith by *Moses*, *Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him.* Now, could any the most expressive form of words, have told the ancient world with more certainty than this fact does, that God's covenant with man, was for a kingdom of heaven?

Our blessed Lord, when departing out of this world, saith to his disciples, *I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also.* And does not *Enoch*'s translation say as much, as if he had been sent again by God to say, *God has taken me from this world into heaven, to make it manifest to you, that where I am gone, there are ye to come also.*

Behold here the adorable goodness of God to the first and succeeding ages of the world! These two great articles of faith, which are now the comfort of the Christian world, namely, victory over

over death, and aſcenſion into heaven, had even then the utmoſt and moſt convincing proof given to them by God.

The old world, from the firſt man, were all in a covenant of redemption.—Life and immortality was both by doctrine and example, made known to them, and nothing remained as a myſtery or wiſdom hidden in God, to be revealed in the laſt times, but that one thing which could not be manifeſted, till by its own actual exiſtence it manifeſted itſelf, namely, the wonderful proceſs of Chriſt in our fallen nature. By which proceſs alone it was that all the faith, as well before as after Chriſt, had all its efficacy.

Hence it is, that the faith and religion of the firſt world was in ſubſtance, the very Chriſtian faith and Chriſtian religion, one and the ſame way, and power of ſalvation; which oneneſs conſiſts in this, that *Chriſt, the ſame yeſterday, to day and for ever*, was the ſame mediator between God and man from the beginning of the world, one and the ſame power of life and ſalvation to murdered *Abel*, as to martyred *Stephen*.

This faith from this original, was their peace with God thro' Jeſus Chriſt, the very ſame faith of which Chriſt ſaith, *He that believeth in me ſhall never die*. The ſame faith of which he again ſaith, *If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink*;

drink; he that believeth in me, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water.

That this was the catholic, ſaving faith, common to all the patriarchial ages, we are aſſured by the Spirit of God in the epiſtles to the *Corinthians* and *Hebrews*, telling in expreſs words, "They did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat, did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink, for they drank of that ſpiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Chriſt."

Are we not told, that very ſame thing of the patriarchal generations, which Chriſt ſaid to thoſe that believed in him, that by eating his fleſh, and drinking his blood, they have eternal life?

In the eleventh chapter of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, the ſame ſpirit, ſpeaking of the patriarchal ages, ſaith, "All theſe died in faith, not having received the promiſes, but having ſeen them afar off, and were perſwaded of them, and embraced them, and confeſſed they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on earth,—who deſired a better country, that is, an heavenly."

Biſhop *Warburton* is ſo out of humour with this whole chapter, thus full of patriarchal light and glory, that he gives it the heatheniſh name of the *Palladium of the cauſe*, which he had undertaken to demoliſh. And he accordingly attacks it with a number of critical inventions, that may as truly be called heatheniſh; for they are in direct oppoſition to all Chriſtian theology.

He will have it, that the faith ſet forth in this whole chapter, is concerning a faith in the abſtract, and not a ſpecific faith in the Meſſiah. An invention as little grounded in the goſpel, as goodneſs in the abſtract, in oppoſition to ſpecific goodneſs. Goodneſs in the abſtract, if it hath any meaning, is all goodneſs, and therefore muſt have every ſpecies of goodneſs in it; ſo faith in the abſtract, if it hath any meaning, is all faith, and therefore muſt have every ſpecies of faith in it.

His firſt reaſon, why this whole chapter is concerning a faith in the abſtract, and not a faith in the Meſſiah, is taken from that definition of faith; "The ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen."

And yet this very definition, if it had been intended to give the moſt diſtinct idea of the nature of faith in the Meſſiah, could not have been better expreſſed, for there is every thing in it that can fully ſet forth that very faith. For if faith in a Meſſiah to come, muſt be a faith in things hoped for, and a reliance upon the certainty of things not ſeen; if this, and nothing but this, can be a true faith in a Meſſiah to come, how could it be more directly pointed at, than by making it to be *the ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen?*

For in this definition, not only the true object, but the true efficacy of faith in the Meſſiah is ſet forth, in that it is made to be ſuch a real foretaſte,

foretaſte, and participation of things hoped for, and not ſeen, as is juſtly called, the very ſubſtance and evidence of them.

Again, the Doctor appeals to the following words, as proof, that the faith deſcribed in this chapter, is not a faith in the Meſſiah, "He that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of all thoſe that diligently ſeek him." Which words contain neither more nor leſs, than if it had been ſaid, "He that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is a fulfiller of his promiſes to all thoſe that truly believe in him, and them: for God cannot be conſidered as a rewarder of mankind, in any other ſenſe, than as he is a fulfiller of his promiſes made to mankind in the covenant of a Meſſiah. For God could not give, nor man receive any rewards or bleſſings, but in and through the one Mediator. Therefore to believe in God, as a rewarder, and bleſſer, is the very truth, and reality of a right faith in the Meſſiah.

The Doctor has another proof, which he ſays, puts the matter out of all doubt. In this chapter it is ſaid, By faith *Rahab* the harlot eſcaped, by faith the *Iſraelites* paſſed through the red ſea, by faith the walls of *Jericho* fell down. "But was any of this, a faith in Jeſus the Meſſiah?"

Now not to rob this argumentation of any of its ſtrength, it muſt be allowed to proceed thus.

Joſhua's faith could not be in the Meſſiah, or the promiſes of God made to his forefathers.

But why ſo? Becauſe by his faith the walls of *Jericho* fell down.

Juſt as theologically argued, as if it had been ſaid, *Abel*'s faith could not be a faith in the ſeed of the woman, promiſed to his parents; becauſe by his faith "he offered unto God a more acceptable ſacrifice than *Cain*."

Enoch's faith could not be in a Meſſiah to come, becauſe by his faith he was taken up to God.

Abraham's faith could not be in the Meſſiah, becauſe by his faith, "He ſojourned in a ſtrange country, choſe to dwell in tents, and looked for a city that hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God." His faith could not be in a Meſſiah to come, becauſe by his *faith he offered up* Iſaac, *his only begotten ſon*.

Having ſet the Doctor's argument in its beſt light, no more need be ſaid about the worth of it.

At laſt comes his invincible argument, which if it was as ſtrong, as he gives out, all that went before might have been ſpared.

"To evince it impoſſible, ſays the Doctor, that faith in the Meſſiah, ſhould be meant by the faith in this chapter, the apoſtle expreſsly ſaith, that all thoſe, to whom he aſſigns this faith, had not received the promiſes; therefore they could not have faith in that, which was never propoſed to their faith. For how ſhould they

they believe on him, of whom they had not heard ?"

Now if this argument has any good logic in it, it muſt follow, that no one, whether patriarch or prophet, before, or after the law, ever had, or could have faith in the Meſſiah, for all who died before the birth of Chriſt, muſt have died without receiving the promiſes, which were then firſt received, when good old *Simeon* could ſing, " Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation."

But St. *Paul*, ſpeaking to the *Jews*, ſaith, " Behold, we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promiſe, which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the ſame to us their children."

Here, by the Spirit of God himſelf, is made known to us, the true difference between receiving, and not receiving the promiſes. The fathers, who could only ſee them afar off, are thoſe who died without receiving the promiſes, that is, without receiving the things promiſed. And their children who lived to ſee the promiſes fulfilled, are they that received the promiſes, that is, the things promiſed.

Farther, the Spirit of God ſaith, " all theſe died in the faith, not having received the promiſes."

But how could they die in this faith? It was for this only reaſon, becauſe they had not received the promiſes, that is, the things promiſed. For

if they had, they could not have died in faith, but in the enjoyment of things promiſed.

The Doctor therefore has unluckily pitched upon that, as an argument againſt the poſſibility of their faith in the Meſſiah, which is the very reaſon, why they did die in the faith of him. For the holy Spirit faith, they all died in the faith; and then the reaſon is added, why they did, namely, becauſe not having received the promiſes; therefore their not having received the promiſes, is the reaſon why they died in the faith of them. And their faith had this foundation, becauſe they had ſeen the things promiſed, as afar off, that is, long after their own deaths, and therefore to be fulfilled, or made good in a future life. Conſequently, their faith was in a redemption to come in a life after this; which ſurely may be affirmed to be a true faith in the promiſed Meſſiah, or in all that, which had been promiſed, from the firſt joyful notice, which God gave of him, *in a ſeed of the woman to bruiſe the head of the ſerpent.* Which in goſpel language is called, *deſtroying the works of the devil*, and bringing all that to life again, which died in *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion.

It is added of theſe holy men dying in the faith of promiſes *ſeen afar off*, that they *were perſwaded of them, and embraced them, and confeſſed they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth; now they that ſay ſuch things, plainly declare, that they ſeek a better country, that is, an heavenly.*

What

What an extravagance is it therefore in the learned Doctor, to say, *How should they believe in him of whom they have not heard*; as in the least degree applicable to those saints of the old world? For their faith was in promises made to them, but not fulfilled before their deaths, which they beholding as afar off, died in the fullest faith and expectation of a blessed life and heavenly country in virtue of them. Therefore they believed in that, of which they had heard, they knew what it was that they believed, *namely*, a redemption from all the evil of their pilgrimage on earth, to a life in heaven.

Our blessed Lord said to the *Jews*, *Your father* Abraham *rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.* Surely then *Abraham* had faith in the Messiah, and yet he is numbered by the apostle amongst those, who died not having received the promises.

But now, though *Abraham*'s rejoicing at the sight of that day, was a sufficient proof, that his faith was in the Messiah, yet the *implicit* faith of the more antient, patriarchal world in *that*, which they had not seen, as *Abraham* had, was as *right* a faith in the Messiah, as *Abraham*'s was. This point is determined, in the following words of Christ. *Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they, which have not seen, and yet have believed.*

This, and this alone, is the only real difference between the religion of the faithful before, and

after Chriſt. *Before Chriſt*, the living faith, was in a Meſſiah to come in ſome wonderful, but unknown way. By this faith, they ſtood under the bleſſed power of the *ſeed of the woman*, and from generation to generation were kept in the one true covenant of life, and union with God.

After Chriſt, the ſame living faith, rejoiced in a Meſſiah made known by a miraculous birth, in the fallen human nature, redeeming it out of every evil of life, of death, of ſin and hell, till it was placed, as God and man in one perſon, at the right hand of God in heaven.

Now when in proceſs of time, the covenant of life between God and man, had loſt much of its effect, and the people of God had greatly fallen away from the faith and piety of the firſt patriarchs, (perhaps not more remarkably than the Chriſtian world is fallen from the truth and faith of the apoſtolic ages) it pleaſed God by *Moſes*, to introduce the deſcendents of the patriarchs into a new *covenant of care, and protection over them.*

Which covenant was not a *new progreſſive ſtate* of that firſt one true religion, that alone unites God and fallen man, nor given for its own ſake, or becauſe of any intrinſic goodneſs in its waſhings and purifications, but granted to the *hardneſs of their hearts*, as a *temporal means* of keeping a fallen people from falling farther under the blindneſs and vanity of their earthly minds.

The

The firſt covenant was ſo perfect that nothing could be added to it, but the manifeſtations of that which was promiſed in it. It was a promiſe of life and redemption to mankind, to be fulfilled in and by the ſeed of the woman. Now the promiſe, and the fulfilling of it, are not (as in human matters) two *diſtant*, *ſeparate* things, that begin at different times, nor can the one ever be without the other. They both began together, and muſt exiſt together. The end, that is, the fulfilling, grows out of the beginning, goes along with it, and has all its efficacy from it; and the beginning, that is, the promiſe, is only ſo much of the end.

That which Chriſt did, ſuffered, and obtained in our fleſh, calling all to turn to God, to deny themſelves, to enter into the ſtricteſt union with him, giving all divine graces, and yet only *according to their faith in him*; that very ſame, the ſeed of the woman from the beginning was always doing, yet ſolely *according to their faith in it.*

* The loſs of *this faith* in the firſt ages of mankind, gave birth to that which is called the *heathen*, or *rational* world; for they both began together, and brought forth a race of people, full of blindneſs, wickedneſs, and idolatry. For ſo far as they departed from faith, ſo far they fell from God, under the dominion and government of their reaſon, paſſions, and appetites. And thence began the kingdom of this world, and the

wiſdom of this world, which ever muſt have full power over every man, as ſoon as he ceaſes to live by faith.

* *Reaſoning* inſtead of faith, brought about the firſt dreadful change in human nature, no leſs than a real death to God. And nothing but faith inſtead of reaſoning, can give any one fallen man power to become again a ſon of God. Now to the end of the world, this will be the unalterable difference between faith in God, and reaſoning about the things of God: they can never change their place, or effects; that which they did to the firſt man, that they will do to the laſt.

* It *matters* not, how much the *revelations* and precepts of God are increaſed, ſince the firſt ſingle command given to *Adam*; for no more is offered to our reaſoning faculty by the whole bible, than by that ſingle precept. And the benefit of the whole bible is loſt to us, as ſoon as we reaſon about the nature and neceſſity of its commands, juſt as the benefit of that firſt precept was loſt in the ſame way.

Hath God indeed ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of every tree in the garden? This was the firſt eſſay, or beginning of reaſoning with God. What it was, and did then, that it will always be, and do. Its nature, and fruits will never be any other, to the end of the world. And though in theſe laſt ages, it hath paſſed through all ſchools of quibbling, and is arrived at its utmoſt height of art, and preciſion of argument, yet as to divine matters, it ſtands

ſtands juſt where it ſtood, when it firſt learnt that logic from the ſerpent, which improved the underſtanding of *Eve*. And at this day, it can ſee no deeper into the things of God; give no better judgment about them, than *that* concluſion it at firſt made, that *death* could not be in the tree which was *ſo good for food, ſo pleaſant to behold, and to be deſired for knowledge.*

In ſhort, theſe two, faith and reaſoning, have, and always will divide all mankind, from the beginning to the end of the world, into two ſorts of men.

The faithful, thro' every age, are of the ſeed of the woman, the children of God, and heirs of redemption.

The reaſoners are of the ſeed of the ſerpent, they are the Heathens thro' every age, and heirs of that confuſion, which happened to the firſt builders of the tower of *Babel*.

* To live by faith, is to be in covenant with God; to live by reaſoning, is to be in compact with ourſelves, with our own vanity, and blindneſs.

* To live by faith, is to live with God in the ſpirit and power of prayer, in ſelf-denial, in contempt of the world, in divine love, in foretaſtes of the world to come, in humility, in patience, long-ſuffering, obedience, reſignation, abſolute dependence upon God, with all that is temporal and earthly under our feet.

* To live by reaſoning, is to be a prey of the old ſerpent, eating duſt with him, groveling in the mire of all earthly paſſions, devoured with pride, imbittered with envy, tools and dupes to ourſelves, toſſed up with falſe hopes, caſt down with vain fears, ſlaves to all the good and evil things of this world, to-day elated with learned praiſe, to-morrow dejected at the loſs of it; yet jogging on year after year, defining words and ideas, diſſecting doctrines and opinions, ſetting all arguments and all objections upon their beſt legs, ſifting and refining all notions, conjectures, and criticiſms, till death puts the ſame full end to *all the wonders* of the ideal fabric, that the cleanſing broom does to the wonders of the ſpider's web, ſo artfully ſpun at the expence of its own vitals.

* This is the unalterable difference between a life of *faith*, and a life of *reaſoning* in the things of God; the former is from God, works with God, and therefore all things are poſſible to it; the latter is from the ſerpent, and therefore vain opinions, falſe judgments, errors and deluſions are inſeparable from it.

Every ſcholar, every diſputer of this world, nay every man, has been where *Eve* was, and has done what ſhe did, when ſhe ſought for *wiſdom* that did *not come* from God. All libraries are a full proof of the remaining power of the firſt ſinful thirſt after it: they are full of a knowledge

knowledge that comes not from God, but from the firſt foundation of ſubtlety that opened her eyes. For as there cannot be any goodneſs in man, but ſo far as the divine goodneſs works in him, ſo there cannot be any divine truth, or knowledge in man, but ſo far as God's truth and knowledge works in him?

Indeed nothing but the one Spirit of Chriſt, living and working in man, from the beginning to the end of the world, can poſſibly be the ſource of any goodneſs, holineſs, or redemption of man.

The ſcriptures abound with proof of this. What can be more deciſive than the following words? *If any man hath not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his. If Chriſt be not in you, ye are reprobates.* And muſt not this be equally true of every man in the world? As true of all men in the patriarchal as in the goſpel ages? *If any man*, ſays the apoſtle; therefore no regard is had to time or place, but where there is *any man*, there this truth is affirmed of him by the apoſtle, that unleſs he hath the Spirit of Chriſt he is none of his, but is a reprobate. But if none can be Chriſt's, but becauſe they have his Spirit living in them, and none can be God's, but becauſe they are Chriſt's, it follows that if Chriſt was not the Spirit and power of *that* firſt, univerſal covenant made by God with fallen *Adam*, if he was not that which was meant by the *ſeed of the woman*, if his Spirit was not from that time the

real

real bruiſer of the ſerpent's head, both *Adam*, and all his poſterity, for much more than three thouſand years lived and died mere reprobates, and that, by an unavoidable neceſſity, becauſe they had not the Spirit of Chriſt living in them.

And now, my Lord, I think I have ſufficiently proved not only my two propoſitions, but alſo that the firſt covenant with *Adam*, by the ſeed of the woman, was the one Chriſtian means of ſalvation, ſo wonderfully manifeſted by the whole proceſs of Chriſt revealed in the goſpel. Therefore it is a truth of the utmoſt certainty, that from the beginning of the world to the end of it, there never was, nor ever will be any more, or any other, but one and the ſame true religion of the goſpel, which began with *Adam* and *Eve* thro' Jeſus Chriſt, the one mediator and reconciler of God to man, who was as certainly the life, ſtrength, and ſalvation of the faithful in the old world, as he was in after-times, when the Son of the Virgin *Mary*, *the way*, *the truth*, *and the life*, to all that have faith in him.

And indeed a plurality of religions, or means of ſalvation, is as groſs an imagination as a plurality of gods, and can ſubſiſt upon no other foundation.

A better religion neceſſarily ſuppoſes a better God, and a change in religion a change in that God that makes it. A partial God, with-holding

ing the *one true power* of ſalvation, till the laſt ages of the world, is as atheiſtical as *Epicurus*'s god.

In ſundry times, and in divers manners, it may pleaſe the wiſdom of God, to vary that which is only an outward help to the truth of religion; but the inward ſpirit and truth of ſalvation, is as unvariable as God himſelf.

The law therefore of *Moſes*, as conſiſting of carnal ordinances, not only *makes nothing perfect*, but brings nothing new into the one covenant of redemption, but was only a temporary, proviſional help, *added becauſe of tranſgreſſions, till the promiſed ſeed ſhould come*; that is, till the whole proceſs of Chriſt, ſhould in its laſt and higheſt degree of evidence manifeſt itſelf in all its parts.

* *This law* then no more belonged to the *true religion* of the Old Teſtament, than of the New, neither did it ever ſtand *between* theſe two diſpenſations, as in their ſtead. No: it was merely on the *outſide* of both, had only a temporary relation to the true religion, either before or after Chriſt, but was no more a *part*, or *inſtead* of them *for a time*, than the hand that ſtands by the road, directing the traveller, is itſelf a part of the road, or inſtead of it.

Now, tho' the reaſon of man ought not to pretend to fathom all the depths of divine wiſdom, in the whole of this *additional covenant*, yet two ends of it are apparent.

Firſt,

Firſt, To bring this corrupted people of *Iſrael* into a new ſtate of ſuch obſervances, as might preſerve them from the groſs ſuperſtitions and idolatries to which they were too much inclined. And this, by a *ritual* of ſuch condeſcenſions to their carnal minds, as might nevertheleſs be a ſchool of reſtraints and diſcipline, full of ſuch purifications, types, and figures, as gave much ſpiritual light and inſtruction, both backwards and forwards. Backwards, as truly ſignificative of their fallen ſtate, daily memorials of their loſt purity and perfection: *forwards*, as variouſly pointing at *that promiſed* victory over the ſerpent, which had been the conſtant faith and hope of their forefathers.

Secondly, That by a theocracy added to this ritual, which ſhewed itſelf in a covenant of continual *care and protection*, openly bleſſing their obedience, and puniſhing their rebellion, and working all kinds of miracles in the overthrow of their enemies, not only they themſelves, but all the reſt of the world, might be forced to ſee and know, that there was no God, that had all power in heaven and on earth, but the one God of *Iſrael*.

As to the *Iſraelites* themſelves, this temporal covenant was a great inſtance of God's goodneſs towards them. For they were thus called out of idolatry, ſeparated from the reſt of the world, built into an holy church of God, put under a moſt amazing theocracy, indulged for a time with

with a ritual of carnal inſtitutions, becauſe of the hardneſs of their hearts, which ritual was full of every inſtruction by doctrines, types, figures and miracles, all ſhewing in the ſtrongeſt manner, that they were to be heirs of the heavenly promiſes made to their forefathers.

And as to the reſt of the world, no particular meſſage or meſſenger, tho' new riſen from the dead, proclaims to them in ſo powerful a manner, the vanity of their idols, the knowledge of the one true God of all the world, as this remarkable body of people ſet up in the midſt of the world did. So that the law, tho' nothing but a temporal covenant of *outward care and protection*, was not only moſt divinely contrived to preſerve the faith of the firſt holy patriarchs, and guide them to the time and manner of receiving the promiſes made to their fathers, but it was all mercy to the reſt of the world, being no leſs than one continual, daily, miraculous call to them to receive bleſſing and protection, life and ſalvation in the knowledge and worſhip of the one true God of heaven and earth.

Now when the children of the patriarchs, were to be entered into this new covenant, the utmoſt care was taken by the Spirit of God, that to eyes that could ſee and ears that could hear, enough ſhould be ſhewn and ſaid, to prevent all *carnal atheiſm* to temporal and outward things, and bring forth a ſpiritual *Iſrael*, full of that faith and piety, in which their holy anceſtors, as pilgrims on earth,

earth, had lived and died devoted to God, in hope of everlasting redemption.

To this end *Moses*, tho' bringing them under a ritual of bodily washings and purifications, yet that they might use them only as outward confessions and memorials of an inward spiritual pollution, and as types and figures of their being to be delivered from it; is led by the inspiration of God, not only to insert in the books of the law, the most sublime doctrines and heavenly precepts of patriarchal holiness, but to lay before them, for their daily instruction, a history of the most deep and affecting truths: truths that had every thing in them fitted to awaken and keep up that strong hope of an eternal redemption, under the power of which, the holy patriarchs had overlooked every thing in time for the sake of eternity.

I mean, the most wonderful history of the creation and curse of this world, of the high origin of man and his dreadful fall from it, his redemption and covenant of life restored in a seed of the woman, the lives and deaths of the holy patriarchs, their patience under all sufferings, their contempt of worldly advantages, their heavenly visions, revelations and speeches from the invisible God, keeping them thereby in an holy intercourse with the *invisible world*, full of faith and hope of the good things of eternity.

To mention one or two of those great doctrines of

of *Moſes*, which ſet forth the original perfection and heavenly nature of man.

God ſaid, *Let us make man in our own image and likeneſs*. Is not this as high a doctrine of *immortality*, does it not give the ſame inſtruction, raiſe the ſame hope, and call for all the ſame elevation of the heart to God, as when St. *John* ſaith, *Beloved, it does not yet appear what we ſhall be; but we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be* LIKE *him?* Juſt the ſame truth, and fitted to have the ſame effects, as when *Moſes* ſaid, God made man in his own LIKENESS.

St. *Paul* ſays, *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf.* A comfortable doctrine indeed, and full of hope of immortality; yet only the ſame comfort and hope of immortality which had been openly preached by *Moſes*.

When *Moſes* bringeth in the Deity, as ſaying, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the ſerpent*; he preaches *that* very ſame goſpel, and in the ſame manner which the apoſtle did. For his words plainly teach, *that God was in the ſeed of the woman reconciling the world unto himſelf*; as when St. *Paul* ſays, *that God was in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf*; the difference is nothing elſe, but in two different names given to our Redeemer.

* Now tho' *Moſes* was the firſt *recorder* of the goſpel ſalvation in a written book, yet was he not the firſt *preacher* of it. For it was proclaimed in *Adam*'s day, from heaven, as the birth of Chriſt

Chriſt in the fleſh, in the days of *Herod*. For when God ſaid, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the ſerpent*, the fame good tidings of ſalvation was *proclaimed from heaven* by God himſelf, as when the angel ſaid to the ſhepherds, *Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Chriſt the Lord.*

* But how can we know this? Only by God's own teaching. For nothing can be truly known of God by the creature, but that which God makes known of himſelf.—So far as God operates in the creature, and manifeſts himſelf in it, ſo far it truly knows, and *is taught of God*.—Any other knowledge of God, however learned, high, or deep it may pretend to be, is as vain and ſpurious as *that goodneſs* which proceeds from ſomething elſe, than God's good Spirit living in us.

* Genius, parts and literature, however ſet forth with wit and rhetoric, have no affinity with divine knowledge; they can no more give it, than the luſt of the eyes and the pride of life can generate humility and purity of heart. Theſe accompliſhments live and act in a ſphere of their own, and have no more power of taking to themſelves any living knowledge of God, than the art of painting to the life, can give the power of *creating* life.

* The blindneſs, and follies which have overrun both the antient and modern world in matters of religion, are a full proof of the capital doctrine of divine revelation, *namely*, that man

(now

(now the defaced image of God) is so miserably changed and fallen from his first created state, that nothing less than a new birth, can bring him again into the region of divine *truth*.

And hence it is, that tho' religion has its deepest ground in the nature of man, tho' God be *essentially*, present in the souls of all men, yet from the fall of *Adam* to the end of the world, it will be an immutable truth, that *strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth* unto divine knowledge; and none but the simple of heart, *the poor in spirit*, or the real followers of Christ can find it.

* But it is time to have done. I shall only trouble your Lordship with the few following remarks.—Dr. *Warburton* says, "He has proved that the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments is not to be *found in*, nor did make a *part* of the Mosaic dispensation." † The Mosaic dispensation means nothing else, but a *temporary* ritual, and a *temporary* theocracy of worldly blessings and curses to support it. These are its fixed bounds within which it is confined. —Therefore, to prove that a state *beyond* this world, was not to be *found in*, nor did make a part of a state, that is confined to this world, is as easily and as vainly done, as to prove that the *garden of Eden* is not to be *found in*, nor makes a part of a map that is confined to *England*. And so infer *that* the *Israelites* therefore had no notion of

† D. L. Vol. II. page 474.

of an immortality, becauſe it was not a *part* of their ritual, is no better than to infer, that the people of *England* can have no notion of the garden of *Eden*, becauſe nothing of it is to be ſeen in the map of this iſland.—But tho' not in the *ritual*, yet *Moſes* in other parts of his books written for the inſtruction of thoſe to whom he gave the ritual, has given them the fulleſt notice and higheſt proof of that *godlike* and *immortal* nature they received at their creation, ſhewing them to be the children of the *patriarchal covenant*, heirs of all the promiſes of eternal redemption made to their fathers from the beginning of the world. Nay, the moſt heavenly doctrines and precepts given by the apoſtles to the redeemed of Chriſt, as *heirs of immortality*, are to be found in the books of *Moſes*.

Dr. *Warburton* takes much pains to get rid of the only true ſenſe of the following texts of *Moſes*. Thus, *Let us make man in our own image and likeneſs*. From theſe words, he ſays, *it is inferred, that the ſoul is immaterial*. But he thinks *Moſes intimated quite another matter*. And ſo do I; for to intimate the *immateriality* of the ſoul, by ſaying, that man was made in the *image and likeneſs* of God, is quite ſhort of the ſenſe of the words: to ſay, that the ſoul is *immaterial*, is ſaying no more, than that it is not a *circle* or a piece of *clay*, it is ſaying nothing at all of it but only of ſomething that it is not. Therefore *Moſes* cannot be ſuppoſed to intimate ſuch a nothing

thing as this, by the image and likeneſs of God. But he aſſerts a much higher matter, namely, that being created in the image of God, he was made a partaker of the divine nature, and therefore had not only immortality, but the riches and perfections of the Deity grounded and growing up. And this is the true ground of our eternal happineſs, that is, of that *eternal increaſe* of union, perfection and glory, which the redeemed ſoul will find in God; it is becauſe the image of God, being as a ſeed ſown into it at its *creation*, it will to all eternity, after his admiſſion into heaven, open more and more its divine nature, and ſpring forth in new and farther fruits of *glory*, *beatitude* and *union* with God.

Every thing that is endleſs, numberleſs in the depth of eternity, is endleſs and numberleſs in the eſſence of the ſoul; what *ſeeing* is, what *hearing*, *feeling*, *&c.* are in their boundleſs variety, and ever increaſing newneſs of delights in eternity, theſe, with all their wonders, are the innate birthright and ſure inheritance of every immortal godly ſoul. And on the other hand, the ſame boundleſs, numberleſs depth and growth of every tormenting, painful, frightful ſenſation, will open itſelf in every ſoul, *that* has loſt its God, and is left to its own immortal life within itſelf.

Vain therefore, is that principle publiſhed to the world, by a celebrated philoſopher of the laſt century, that the ſoul in its *firſt created ſtate*, is

is a mere *raſa tabula*, or *blank paper*. A fiction, that is contradicted by all that we know of every created thing in nature.

For every creature of this world, animate or inanimate, is in its degree, a *microcoſm* of all the powers, that are in the great world, of which it is a part. And nothing through all this univerſe, has in its eſſence, only the nature of a *raſa tabula*, or blank paper, but is in its kind, full of the riches, and powers of all outward nature.

In like manner muſt it be with the eternal world; every thing which comes from it, muſt be in its degree, a *microcoſm* of all the powers and glories of eternity.

Let it be ſaid, that the *matter of this world*, was in its firſt created ſtate, free from all extenſion, ſolidity and parts, and this would be as grave a ſaying, and as much founded in nature, as the *raſa tabula* of the ſoul: ſay again, that by degrees it got a materiality of length, breadth and parts, from *without*, and this would be no greater a wonder, than that a ſoul, created inwardly deſtitute of any principle of knowledge, ſhould from outward cauſes grow up into a profound philoſopher. *Again*, ſay that the ſoul was at firſt, but a *blank paper*, till the organs of the body began to act upon it; and may not the enemies of religion, as juſtly ſay, that it muſt be the ſame blank paper again at the laſt, when the body ſhall be broken off from it?

If

If therefore the *Eſſay upon human underſtanding* (which the Doctor calls the moſt original book that ever was publiſhed) has produced a metaphyſicks, in many points dangerous to religion, and greatly ſerviceable to falſe, and ſuperficial reaſoning, it is not to be wondered at, ſince ſo eminent an error, is the fundamental principle on which it proceeds.

But to return to the Doctor: he ſays, "The divine image and likeneſs muſt conſiſt in ſomething that is peculiar to man,—that the two things *peculiar* to man, are his ſhape, and his reaſon; that it cannot be in his ſhape, therefore it muſt be in his reaſon."†

The divine image and likeneſs cannot conſiſt in ſomething that is peculiar to man. It might as well conſiſt in his ſhape, as in his faculty of making *ſyllogiſms*; but on the contrary, it muſt conſiſt in that, and only that, which is, peculiar to God. Nor could man poſſibly be created in the image and likeneſs of God, unleſs ſomething peculiar to God, had been the divine glory and perfection of his creaturely life. For the creaturely life, and all that is peculiar to it, is at the utmoſt diſtance from God, and can only have a likeneſs to that, which is to be found in creatures. —God dwelling in a ſupernatural way in the creature, is the only poſſible image of God that can be in it. The fallen angels have every thing *that* was creaturely *left* in them, but they are hor-

† Page 554.

rible devils, becauſe they have loſt their ſupernatural image of God, which dwelt in them at their creation. They have ſtill reaſon, craft and ſubtlety; but becauſe they have nothing, but what is peculiar to the creature, they are all rage, torment and miſery.

The Doctor therefore, inſtead of appealing to two things in man, his ſhape and his reaſon, as his true diſtinction from beaſts, ſhould have ſaid, by the authority of *Moſes*, that only one thing was peculiar to man, as his glorious diſtinction both from fallen angels, and terreſtrial animals, and *that* one thing is, his being created in the image and likeneſs of God. As to his outward ſhape, conſidered only as different from other animals, there is but little diſtinction in it; becauſe they are as different in ſhape from one another, as man is from them all. And if man at his creation had had no higher a gueſt within him, than his reaſon, his ſhape would have been little better, than that of a fox, or a ſerpent. For reaſon, when not under the government of a higher principle, is that ſame craft, and cunning, *that* is viſible in variety of beaſts; and is for the moſt part, as earthly an inſtrument of miſchievous paſſions, and luſts in man, as it is in beaſts. And what is more, it muſt be ſo, till it comes under the government of *that*, which was the *image and likeneſs* of God, in the firſt creation of man.

* What is the difference between reaſon in St. *Paul*, a *Spinoſa*, a *Hobbes*, or a *Bolingbroke*? None

None at all, or no other than in their outward ſhape. Therefore if reaſon be the divine image and likeneſs of God in man, a *Hobbes* and a *Bolingbroke*, had as much of it as St. *Paul*. And a man that is all his life long reaſoning himſelf into atheiſm, and the wiſdom of living according to his own luſts, muſt be allowed to give daily proof of his having the image and likeneſs of God, very powerfully manifeſted in him.

The Doctor's great proof, that reaſon is the image and likeneſs of God, is becauſe *Moſes* immediately adds, *Let them rule over the fiſh of the ſea, and over the fowls of heaven, and over the beaſts of the earth.* " For what, ſays he could inveſt man with this dominion *de facto*, as well as *de jure*, but his reaſon ?"†

Our bleſſed Lord, at leaving the world, ſaith, " Theſe ſigns ſhall follow them that believe ; in my name, they ſhall caſt out devils, they ſhall ſpeak with new tongues, they ſhall take up ſerpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it ſhall not hurt them." Now let it be aſked, *what could inveſt the believers in Chriſt with this dominion* de facto, *as well as* de jure, *but their reaſon?* Both this queſtion, and the ſolution of it, is juſt as ſound, and theological as the Doctor's.

For it was not any thing of their own, but ſolely the name, that is, power of Chriſt dwelling, and operating in them, that inveſted them with the dominion over devils, ſerpents, diſeaſes,

* D. L page 554.

and all outward deadly, or hurtful things. Now *that* which gave this power, to the believers in Chriſt, was *that very ſame*, which gave to the firſt perfect man, a *power of ruling* over all the creatures of this world, and of living in full ſuperiority and dominion over all that was, or could be hurtful, and deadly, in fire, or water, heat or cold, or any elementary things. So *that Adam* whilſt ſtanding in his firſt ſtate of glory, and power, had the ſame reaſon to ſay of all *that* he was, and did, that which St. *Paul* ſaid, yet *not I, but Chriſt that liveth in me.*

And how the Doctor came to think of any other power, as the *ability* of man to *rule* over the creatures, is very ſtrange, ſince the goſpel has ſo plainly told him, *that they only are the children of God, who are led by the Spirit of God.* If therefore the firſt man, created in the image and likeneſs of God, may be ſuppoſed by his creation, to have been a child of God, then ſure is it, that he had the *Spirit of God*, living and working in him. And that ſurely may be allowed to have been his *true* and his only qualification, to have and exerciſe a dominion over the reſt of the creation.

The Doctor, in order to find out *that* image, and likeneſs of God in man, of which *Moſes* writes, looks into the conſtitution of that *two-legged* animal, who is *the diſputer of the world.* As likely to ſucceed, as if in order to find out *that paradiſe*,

of

of which *Moſes* writes, he ſhould ſearch for it in the *hundreds* of *Eſſex*, or in the *wilds* of *Kent*.

For *Moſes*, to prevent the folly of looking for the divine image in any thing, that is *natural* to the *preſent* ſtate of man, has given us aſſurance; that *this firſt* man, created in the image of God, died the very day that he did eat of the forbidden tree. And that nothing of this divine man remained but terrors within, and ſuch a figure of himſelf, as filled him with ſhame and confuſion.

And a greater than *Moſes* has told us, *that* man, in his preſent *natural ſtate*, is ſo dead to that firſt divine glory, that he has no poſſibility of entering into the kingdom of God till he is born again from above. This ſufficiently ſhews *that* he who will find out in what the image of God in man conſiſted, muſt as the apoſtle ſaith, *walk by faith and not by ſight*.

The next text of *Moſes*, which the Doctor miſerably injures, is thus quoted by him, "The Lord God formed man of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul; that is, ſay the objectors, had an immortal ſoul."

Who the objectors are, I know not; but the truth of the text requires us to ſay, that therefore man had a divine and godlike ſoul, a true offſpring of the divine nature. Becauſe the breath or Spirit of the holy triune God, was that breath by which he was made a living ſoul.

—And therefore the riches of this firſt life in man, were the riches of the divine nature manifeſting itſelf in the ſoul.

But the Doctor will have it, that only an unlearned *Engliſh* reader, can collect any thing to be divine in the ſoul, from the words of *Moſes*, as not knowing that what is tranſlated a living ſoul, ſignifies, in the original, only a living animal. But this, every *Engliſh* reader may know to be a vain criticiſm; for no ſtreſs is laid upon the expreſſion, a living ſoul, no more than if it had been ſaid, a living animal. But the full proof of the divine greatneſs of the human ſoul, lies ſolely in this, that the breath or ſpirit of the holy Trinity was breathed into it, and was that which made it to be a living ſoul, and therefore the life that aroſe in it, was the life of God in the ſoul.

The Doctor thus comments upon the words of the text. "God, the great plaſtic artiſt, is here repreſented, as making and ſhaping out a figure of earth and clay, which he afterwards animates or inſpires with life. He breathed into this ſtatue the breath of life, and the lump of clay became a living creature."

Had this elegant and moſt graphical deſcription been only found in ſome minor poet, or ſchool declamation, it might have been overlooked; but in a proſe treatiſe of divinity, it ought not to paſs uncenſured. I know of nothing that can equal it, unleſs it be ſuppoſed that ſome ingenious

nious anthropomorphite, reading these words, *and the Lord God did unto Adam and Eve make coats of skins, and cloathed them*; should thus describe the matter, "Here, God, the great artist, is represented, as having the skins of beasts before him, and with his divine hands, cutting, shaping and joining them together in forms of garments, fitted to the size and distinction of the first man and his wife."

I may defy any one to shew, that this comment does not pay as great a regard to the *letter*, and do as much honour to the sense of this scripture, as the Doctor's doth to the other text.

The sacred text, *God formed man* of the dust of *the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life*, is a short and full declaration of a most important truth, namely, that man was brought into being, *in a twofold nature*, having the nature of this outward world, and the nature of heaven; the former signified by his being formed of the dust of the ground, the *latter*, by the breath of God breathed into him. To be formed out of the dust of the ground, is the same thing, as if it had been said, that he was formed out of all the *riches*, *powers*, and *virtues* that are in this whole visible world. For every property of nature is hidden in the earth. And man, so far as he was designed to be a creature of this outward world, is therefore said to be formed out of the earth, because the earth is not only the treasure-house of all that is in outward nature,

but is the *mother* of all the three other elements. And as all things of this world, whether animate or in animate, are from the earth as their mother, ſo in the earth is there every power and bleſſing of life, to ſuſtain every thing *that* has its body from it; as appears by that fruitful power, which is continually giving forth itſelf in all kinds of vegetable food, *fitted* to the wants of every living creature.

* What therefore can it be called, but a moſt deplorable blindneſs in learned reaſon, to conſider man as making his firſt entrance into paradiſe in no *better a ſtate than that of duſt and clay*, formed into a dead lumpiſh figure of a man, for this reaſon, becauſe he was ſaid to be formed out of the duſt of the ground? Blindneſs indeed! when it is ſo evident, *that* even now, after the curſe is in the earth, yet every thing, even the pooreſt *weed* that comes out of the duſt of the ground, is in a much higher ſtate, and enters into this world with a degree of life from its mother *the* earth.—Had the Doctor never ſeen, or heard of any other things formed out of the earth, but ſuch as our potters, and dealers in clay can make out of it, there might have been ſome ſort of excuſe for his *Adam* of dead clay formed out of the earth. But when every day of his life has ſhewn him that almoſt infinite variety, powers, virtues and wonders in the kingdom of vegetables, all coming out of the earth, and nouriſhed by it; when the ſcripture has told him

that

that the beaſts and cattle of all kinds were formed out of the earth, and their fleſh and blood from it, and their daily ſuſtenance from its fruitful womb: it is ſtrange to a degree of aſtoniſhment, that he ſhould hold, *that* out of this *rich* earth, when in its paradiſical ſtate, when man, the glory of the creation, was formed out of it, and God the former, nothing would come forth, but a dead lump of clay in the figure of a man.

Again, What a total diſregard has the Doctor here ſhewn to the very letter of ſcripture? The text ſaith, *God formed man out of the duſt of the ground*, nothing elſe is aſcribed to God, as his work in this matter; but the Doctor adds quite another matter as the work of God, namely, ſhaping and forming lumpiſh clay into a dead figure of a man.

And then follows another fiction equally againſt the letter of ſcripture. For he ſays, that AFTERWARDS, God, breathed life into it. But in the ſcripture account, there is not a ſyllable of any firſt, or afterwards.—Two things are ſpoken of the birth of man, and as they cannot be ſpoken both at once, ſo one muſt come after the other in the relation of them. The ſcripture mentions them as two diſtinct things; and the reaſon of mentioning them thus diſtinctly, is not to teach us, they were done at two different times, the one firſt, and the other afterwards, but to give us the aſſurance, that man came into

the world in a twofold nature, the one from the heavenly breath of God, and the other from this visible world.

But the union of these two natures in the formation of man, was owing to one, and the same operation of God.—There is no sooner, or later, in the beginning of the soul, and of the body: the beginning of one, is the beginning of the other.

To suppose that man was made a dead image, and afterwards had life breathed into it, is no better philosophy, than to suppose, that God first created the vegetable creature, and afterwards added a vegetable life to it; that he first created the globe of the sun, and afterwards added heat and light to it.

God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature. What a folly to suppose, that the creature, and its life, are two separate things, that the one came first, and the other afterwards? No better, than supposing, that a circle and its roundness, are two separate things, that first comes forth the figure, and afterwards its roundness.

But the general design of the *D. L.* is to establish this most horrible doctrine, that *Moses* designedly and industriously secreted from God's chosen people, all thought of any eternal relation that they had with God; which is the same as saying, that he designedly suppressed the one only possible foundation of true religion. For the

the immortality of the human nature, is the only ground of homage and regard to an invisible and eternal God. And unless man was by nature essentially related to God, and the eternal world, it would have been as unreasonable for the God of the eternal world to call man to an heavenly adoration of him, as to bid earthly flesh and blood *be*, and *do* that which angels are, and do in heaven. Therefore the first notice from an eternal God, given to man of a religious homage due to him, and the bare capacity of man to embrace such notice, is the greatest proofs that man has something of the eternal God in him. For as nothing can hunger, but that which by nature both wants and has a capacity to eat; so nothing can receive a religion relating to the eternal God, but that which has within itself, both a want and capacity to partake of the eternal world. And had not man an eternal spirit in him, as an offspring of the eternal God, he could no more want to have any intercourse with the eternal world, than a fish can want to be out of the water. Nor could any taught adoration of the one eternal God enter any further into his heart, or be of more use to him, than so much religion taught to a parrot. For man being, or believing himself to be, as merely a creature of this world, as the parrot is, could no more regard any thing, but what his earthly nature has a fondness for, than the parrot doth. *Let us eat and drink for*

to-morrow we die, would be the higheſt and trueſt philoſophy, if there is no more of a divine life, or heavenly nature in man, than in the chattering ſparrow. In this caſe, worldly craft, whether in a fox or a man, is the higheſt uſe of its natural powers. For if the earthly life is equally *the all* of both, earthly wiſdom muſt be *equally* the perfection of them both. For it can no more be the duty of an earthly creature to be heavenly minded, than of a celeſtial creature to be carnally minded.

If therefore the *Iſraelites* under *Moſes*, were by him directed to conſider themſelves merely as creatures of this world, having nothing to enjoy, or hope for, but the good things of this life, it muſt be ſaid he did all that well could be done, to make them an *earthly*, *covetous*, *rapacious*, *ſtiff-necked* and *brutal* people. And all the complaints which the prophets have brought againſt them, on that account, ought to have been made only againſt *Moſes* himſelf, and the religion that was ſet up by him. For a religion only offering, and wholly confining people to earthly enjoyments, may ſurely be ſaid, not only to make, but even require them to be wholly ſenſual and earthly minded. And every hearty believer of ſuch a religion, is by his very faith called upon, to make the moſt that he can, of the *luſt of the fleſh*, *the luſt of the eyes*, *and the pride of life*.

* *Moſes*

* *Moſes* ſaith, "Hear, *O Iſrael*, the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy ſtrength." Now theſe *Iſraëlites* looking backwards to God's covenant of redemption, made with their forefathers, of which they were the undoubted heirs; and forwards to this new covenant of a new theocracy, added, as God's peculiar mercy to them in this life, to keep them to himſelf, to ſupport them under their afflictions, and to arm them with patience in waiting for that eternal redemption, in the faith of which, their anceſtors had died ſo full of joy and comfort: in this double view of their ſtate under God, which *Moſes* had ſo fully ſet before *them*, and with the ſtrongeſt injunctions to be daily teaching them to their children, they had the higheſt reaſon to rejoice in God, and to love him with all their heart and ſoul and ſtrength.

But to ſuppoſe that *Moſes*, deſignedly ſecreting from them, the knowledge of that eternal relation they had to God, on which the hopes of their forefathers were founded, and on which he himſelf was made able to chuſe the afflictions of Chriſt, has ſomething very ſhocking in it. For if *Moſes* was ſo good a man, becauſe he had faith in the eternal redemption promiſed from the beginning, can there be more cruelty, than in ſuppoſing him, deſigning by his religious ſyſtem, wholly to obliterate all thought and remembrance

brance of God's unchangeable covenant of life, and extinguish all sense and hope of a redemption to come? To what purpose is it to say to such a people, shut up in earthly hopes, "Thou shalt love the one God of heaven with all thy heart?" For if he had succeeded in his design, fixed them in the belief, that they had no treasure but in this world, we have Christ's word for it, that the affections of their hearts could go no where else, saying, as an eternal truth, *that where our treasure is, there must be the heart also.* So that in this case, no love of God, and therefore no other divine virtue, could have any place in those who conformed to the design of *Moses.*

The Doctor, with some indignation, tries to evade this unavoidable consequence. "The true foundation of morality is the will of God: But is not the distinction between right and wrong, perpetually enforced by the law of *Moses* on this principle? This then is the spring of all virtue, and to give it the greatest efficacy, the love and fear of God is there incessantly inculcated. But how does a long or short existence, a life here, or elsewhere, affect at all the practice of virtue so founded?" †

All this is quite beside the point, and leaves the *Jews* under the same incapacity of every divine virtue, as has been above asserted. For a short or long existence, is here never thought of,

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† *D. L.* page 587.

as a reaſon, why we ſhould, or ſhould not be morally good. For duration, conſidered in itſelf, whether ſhort or long, is only a natural conſequence of *that kind* of life, which the creature hath. For, ſuch as is its *internal* nature, ſuch is the good, and evil *that* belongs to it, without any regard to its longer or ſhorter duration.

Now it is the internal nature of man, not conſidered as ſhort, but as wholly earthly, and created for only *earthly goods*, *that* is the reaſon, why ſuch a kind of life is incapable of any divine virtue, and cannot poſſibly have any other love, affections or tempers, but ſuch as are confined to this world: and alſo, why every kind of envy, greedineſs, craft, and contrivance how to get the moſt of every earthly thing, muſt govern every man, that has only the earthly nature in him, as unavoidably, as they govern birds, and beaſts. And to tell ſuch a people of a goodneſs, to which their earthly nature does not lead them, as it leads every other animal to *that* which it likes, is as vain, as to preach to the ſparks, not to fly upwards. Nor can a nature, wholly earthly, any more ſin by coveting only earthly things, than the *lion* ſins, by having all his heart ſet upon his prey.

But the Doctor has a maxim, by which he proves, that the *Jews*, though wholly confined to earthly hopes, and enjoyments, yet might and ought to have been heavenly minded, *namely*, becauſe *the true foundation of morality, is the will of*

of God. And yet this very maxim is itſelf a ſufficient proof, than an earthly people, created only for earthly goods, are by the very will of God, directed to be earthly minded. For the will of God, in every creature, is manifeſted by *that kind* of nature, which it hath only from God. Therefore earthly creatures, by being earthly minded, pay as full obedience to the will of God, as pure heavenly ſpirits by their being heavenly minded. Therefore if man is only an animal of this world, by the will of God, diſtinguiſhed only from other creatures, by ſuperior ſkill, ſubtlety, and contrivances, (as they are from one another) he neither is, nor can be, under any other law, relating to his good and evil, but that which is the law of all other animals, that have all their good and evil from this world. And as it is as good in the wolf, to be ravening, as in the lamb to be harmleſs, becauſe they both follow their created nature; ſo if man is as merely a creature of this world, as they are, when he, by his ſuperior ſubtlety, in order to make the moſt of his worldly life, either feigns the innocence of the lamb, or puts on the ravening wolf, he follows his nature, as they do theirs, and is juſt as good and as bad as they are. And to tell ſuch a man of the beauty of holineſs, or call him to the denial of his own will, for this reaſon, becauſe the true foundation of virtue, is the will of God, would be to as much purpoſe, as if you was only to require him never to ſleep any more, becauſe holy angels never ſleep in heaven. For what can a creature that can have no good, all its life, but that which is like the

good

good of milk and honey, have to do with any divine virtue?—If therefore *Moſes* deſignedly, fixed the *Iſraelites* in a belief, that they had no good to hope for, but that which fleſh and blood could find in earthly things, they were by him taken out of the ſphere of every virtue, that can be called godly or divine, and could have no fear of God, but like that, which they might have towards him, or the giants, nor any love of God, but that which they had to their bellies.

Farther, that the Doctor has not entered into any right conception of the ſubject, he is upon, is plain from his aſking, "But how does a ſhort or long exiſtence, a life here, or elſewhere, at all affect the practice of virtue ſo founded?"—It juſt ſo much affects it, as place, or ſpace affects the exiſtence of bodies. They are not brought forth by place or ſpace, but they could have no exiſtence but in place or ſpace. And thus it is, that duration affects the practice of all divine virtue, it could have no poſſibility of exiſtence, but in a nature incapable of dying. —Corruptibility, and divine goodneſs, are as impoſſible to be united, as life and death.—Death may as well exert the functions of life, as a mortal creature breathe heavenly tempers and affections. For though the duration of the creature is not the ground, or reaſon of any divine virtue, yet no creature can be capable of it, but that, which by the divinity of its birth, is born immortal.

What

What an inconſiſtency, to ſay of a creature of a ſhort exiſtence, or whoſe life is vaniſhing away, that its true father is in heaven, and that it ought therefore " to be perfect as its heavenly Father is perfect?" Can that which is daily tending to non-exiſtence, be daily growing up in the perfection of God, or that which is always approaching towards death, be a child of the ever-living God? As well might it be ſaid of the muſhroom, that it has the angels in heaven for its brethren, as of man, beginning to exiſt to-day, and ending his exiſtence to-morrow, that he is a child of his everlaſting Father in heaven,

There are ſome other egregious errors which I intended to have remarked, but I am already got beyond the proper bounds of a letter.—But holy *David*'s caſe, I cannot but mention, as ſufficient to have deterred the Doctor from an hypotheſis, which has obliged him to place this ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael* amongſt thoſe, who had not the leaſt thought of any eternal relation to God. This holy *David*, the type of Chriſt, " who knew that God had ſworn with an oath, that out of the fruit of his loins, he would raiſe up Chriſt to ſit on his throne:" this great prophet, who foretold the reſurrection of Chriſt, *that his ſoul was not left in hell, neither did his fleſh ſee corruption*; this *David*, thus deep in the counſels of God, and acquainted with the great article of the reſurrection, this ſpiritual, typical, prophefying *David*, is, for the ſake of the Doctor's project,

ject, crowded amongſt thoſe, who were not allowed to have any other relation to God, or any thing elſe to hope from him, or thank him for, but the bleſſings of a temporal life, till death had put the ſame end, to all of *David*, as it did to thoſe few ſheep, that he once kept. And what is ſtill worſe, the ſame *David* is made the moſt zealous preacher of the folly of fearing, or hoping for any thing after death: and is appealed to by the Doctor, and his aſſiſtant, as giving the moſt full evidence againſt all happineſs, but that of this life, and repreſented in his divine tranſports, as ſetting forth the wiſdom of believing that the life of man ends like that of rotten ſheep, in a death *that* brings him into the dark land of forgetfulneſs; ſinging glorioufly, "the dead praiſe not the Lord, neither any that go down into ſilence. In death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave, who ſhall give thee thanks?"

Thus it is, that *David*, by theſe gentlemen is made a preacher againſt a future ſtate; not conſidering that ſuch infidelity would have been worſe in *David* than it poſſibly can be in any modern infidel. But the truth is, the holy prophet in all paſſages of this kind, is only calling upon God for the continuance and full manifeſtation of the bleſſings of *that* temporal theocracy, which could only be given by God, or received by man whilſt he was on this ſide death. And the *darkneſs*, *ſilence*, or *inſenſibility* affirmed of death, has no relation to a *total end* of life and ſenſibility,

ſenſibility, but ſolely to an end of all *enjoyment*, of the bleſſings promiſed by the divine theocracy. *David*, as *ſon* of *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, had their faith and piety, and ſuch his pſalms are full of heavenly devotion, and flaming with divine love. But *David*, as a *ſon* of the covenant made with *Moſes*, was alſo an heir of the temporal bleſſings of the theocracy; and in this capacity, had a right to ſay, *Why do the wicked proſper? Wilt thou ſhew thy wonders in the grave?* That is, canſt thou give thy promiſed temporal bleſſings, when death has taken away all poſſibility of receiving them?

But if it could be ſuppoſed, that *David* by the foregoing expreſſions, meant to give up the promiſes of eternal redemption made to all his forefathers, and called the world to look for no more but what they could get in this vale of miſery; what excuſe can be made for the Chriſtian church, which from firſt to laſt, has made ſuch heatheniſh ſongs a part of the goſpel ſervice? For in this caſe, theſe pſalms may be juſtly eſteemed prophane, as having a more direct tendency to beget and fix infidelity in the hearts of men, than the hymns of the Heathen poets.

I muſt yet add a word, upon the Doctor's moſt theological account of man's firſt ability to ſpeak articulate words.

" In judging, ſays he, only from the *nature of things*, one ſhould be apt to embrace the opinion

nion of *Diodorus Siculus*, that firſt the men lived for ſome time in woods and caves, after the manner of beaſts, uttering only *confuſed ſounds*."† And yet it is hardly poſſible for a man to make a judgment more contrary to the nature of things. For does not the nature of almoſt all animals, beaſts and birds ſhew us, that they have a natural untaught language, not conſiſting of *confuſed ſounds*, but diſtinct by an articulate difference and intelligible to every one of the ſame ſpecies? If therefore the nature of things will allow us to ſuppoſe, that man was created as perfect in his kind as the animals were in theirs, then it will oblige us to affirm, that the firſt of mankind had from nature, an untaught language, as ſuitable to the ends of their creation, as diſtinct and intelligible to themſelves, as that of birds or beaſts is to them in their ſeveral kinds. Now it muſt not be ſaid that the Doctor has adopted the whole opinion of *Diodorus*, tho' ſo highly (as he thinks) conformable to the nature of things; for he has given up that of man's living *in woods and caves*, and has only choſen to ſtand by that which is much the worſt part of it, namely, his natural inability to utter any thing *but confuſed ſounds*.—However, to make amends for all this poverty of ſpeech, in which man was brought forth by God; the Doctor has a conjecture, how it ſoon came to be better with him. In ſcripture, ſays he, "we find that God

† D. L. Vol. II. page 81.

God taught the firſt man religion, and can we think he would not at the ſame time teach him language? Again, when God created man he made woman for his companion, but the only means of enjoying that benefit was the uſe of ſpeech. Can we believe that he would leave them to get out of the *forlorn condition of brutality* as they could?"†—Shocking and even blaſphemous words! For little ſhort can it be of that, to ſay, that man, created in the image and likeneſs of God, was created in a *forlorn condition of brutality?* Can any infidel more deſpiſe and ridicule all that is ſaid both in the Old and New Teſtament, concerning man's creation, his high birth and deſtination, his fall and redemption, than is here done?"

In the ſcripture we are told, that man in the firſt, perfect ſtate of his creation, came forth a living image and likeneſs of the all-perfect God; that he came forth in this exalted ſtate of perfection, above all other animals of this world, in order to be a lord and ruler over them. Can there be a more open ridicule made of all this, than to hold, that this firſt glorious image of God came forth in a *forlorn brutal condition*, unable to utter any thing, but *confuſed ſounds?* Or what can be more unbecoming a Chriſtian Doctor, than to eſpouſe ſuch a paltry notion from the authority of a pagan *Greek*, in full contradiction to all that *Moſes*, Chriſt and his apoſtles

† D. L. ibid.

apoſtles have ſaid of the firſt heavenly nature, divine birth and glorious prerogative of man? What a mockery is here made of the whole Chriſtian ſyſtem, which ſuppoſes man to have fallen from ſuch a high degree of heavenly union with God, that nothing leſs than the birth of the Son of God in fallen man, could reſtore him to that perfection which he had at firſt? What a folly to talk of the fall of man, if he came out of the hands of God in a forlorn condition of brutality?

But the Doctor comes now to his full proof, that man had at firſt no articulate ſpeech, and that he was actually taught it afterwards by God; "God brought every beaſt of the field, and every fowl of the air unto *Adam*, to ſee what he would call them."

And yet, ſo unlucky is the Doctor, that no words can give a higher proof, that *Adam* had not only an articulate ſpeech, but in ſuch a degree of perfection, as none of his natural ſons, not the whole tribe of linguiſts, critics, and grammarians, ever had, or can poſſibly have. For if it could be ſuppoſed, that any man was a hundred times more knowing than the Doctor is, in what he calls his *enigmatic*, *curiologic*, *hierogliphic*, *emblematic*, *ſymbolic* profundities, yet if all the beaſts of the field, and all the fowls of the air, were to be brought before him to be diſtinguiſhed from one another, by articulate ſounds of his voice, even ſuch a man would be as unequal to the

the taſk, as a *Tom Thumb*. And of all the abſurdities, *that* ever were heard of, ſurely none can equal that, of ſuppoſing, that *Adam* had not articulate ſpeech, but had it to learn at a time, when he was called to the exerciſe of the higheſt perfection of language, namely, to diſtinguiſh ſuch an infinite number of creatures, by different articulate ſounds of his voice. It is like ſuppoſing, that a man whoſe eyes had no natural power of diſtinguiſhing one thing from another, ſhould on that account, have all the creatures in the world, brought before him, that he might deſcribe every difference in form, and figure, that belonged to them.

The Doctor has by ſtrength of genius, and great induſtry, amaſſed together no ſmall heap of learned deciſions of points, doctrines, as well Heatheniſh, as Chriſtian, much the greateſt part of which, the Chriſtian reader will find himſelf obliged to drive out of his thoughts, as ſoon as he can in good earneſt ſay, *What muſt I do to be ſaved?*—This collection of deciſions, he calls his *projected defence of Chriſtianity*, which if it was ſuch, Chriſtianity muſt have been but poorly provided for its ſupport by the four goſpels. I ſhall make no doubt of his intending, what he ſays by them. But a project in defence of Chriſtianity, is not more promiſing, than a trap to catch humility. The nature of things allows no more of the one, than of the other. To be a defender of Chriſtianity, is to

be

be a defender of Chriſt, but none can defend him in any other degree, than ſo far as he is his follower. To be with Chriſt, is *to walk as he walked*, and he *that* is not ſo with him, is *againſt him*.

There are two ways of embracing Chriſtianity, the one is as a *ſinner*, the other as a *ſcholar*; the former is the way taught by Chriſt and his apoſtles, the latter is the invention of men, fallen from the Chriſtian life under the power of natural reaſon, and verbal learning.—Now theſe two ways are not to be conſidered, as only the one better than the other, but in ſuch a difference, as right and wrong, true and falſe, bear to one another. For there is no poſſibility of taking one ſtep in Chriſtianity, but as a ſinner, for it has no errand but to the ſinner, has no relief but for ſin, and nothing can receive it, but the heart wounded, and wearied with the burden of its own ſin. All the goſpel is but a foreign tale, a dead letter to the moſt logically learned man in the world, who does not feel in the depth of his ſoul, that all the reaſonableneſs, and excellency of goſpel truth, lies in that ſund of ſin, impurity, and corrupt tempers, which are inſeparable from him, till he is born again. And if the Doctor, in his application to the Deiſts, had preſſed home this affecting truth, which ſtands at the door of every man's heart, and is the only ground of Chriſtian redemption, he had ſhewn a better care and concern for their

ſouls, and had done more to awaken them out of their infidelity, than by all that wit and ſatyr in his dedication of his book to them. For like begets like; love and ſerioufneſs in the ſpeaker, beget love and ſerioufneſs in the hearer; and he that has no earneſtneſs towards unbelievers, but that of perſwading them not to loſe their ſhare of the love and mercy of God in Chriſt Jeſus, towards helpleſs fallen men, can only do it, in the ſpirit and language of that love and goodneſs, in whoſe arms, he longs to ſee them embraced.

But as no man ever came to Chriſt, but becauſe he was weary, and heavy laden with the burden of his own natural diſorder, and wanted reſt to his ſoul, ſo nothing can help men to find the neceſſity of coming to Chriſt, but that which helps him to find and feel a miſery of ſin and corruption, which in ſome, the care and pleaſures of this life, and in others the happineſs of finding themſelves wits, and polite ſcholars, never ſuffered them to feel before.

Our Lord's parable of the *prodigal* ſon, contains the whole matter between God and fallen man. It relates nothing particular to this, or that perſon, but ſets forth the ſtrict truth of every man's ſtate, with regard to his heavenly Father. For every ſon of *Adam* has every thing in him, that is ſaid of that prodigal; he has loſt his firſt ſtate, is wandered as far from his heavenly Father and country, has abuſed and waſted his

his Father's bleſſings, and is that very poor ſwine-herd, craving huſks in a land of famine, inſtead of living in the glory of his Father's family; and of every reader of that parable, it may be juſtly ſaid, *Thou art the man.* And no ſon of *Adam*, do what he will, can poſſibly come out of the poverty, ſhame, and miſery of his fallen ſtate, tell he finds and feels, and confeſſes from the bottom of his heart, all that which the penitent prodigal found, felt and confeſſed.

I ſhould have had much uneaſineſs, my Lord, in expoſing ſo many groſs errors both in the matter, and manner of the Doctor's books, did not my heart bear me witneſs, that no want of good-will, or due reſpect towards him, but ſolely a regard to that which ought only to be regarded, has directed my pen.

The End of the SIXTH VOLUME.

THE

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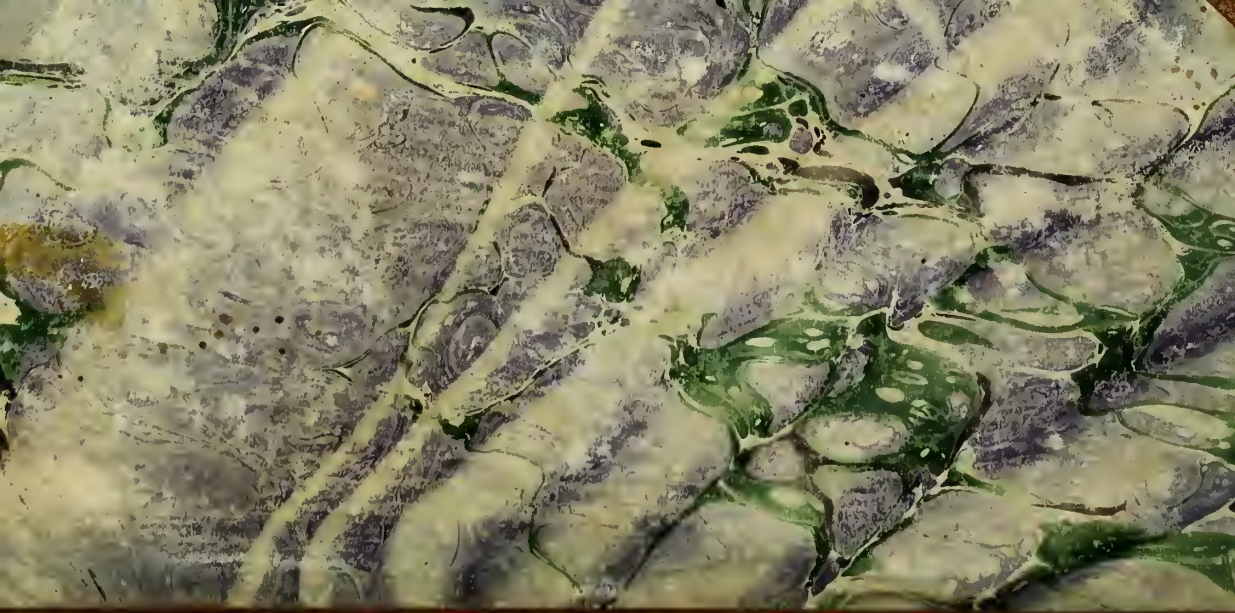
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